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THE
ADELPHI

OCTOBER—DECEMBER 1947

The Struggle for Freedom : A Commentary
JOHN MIDDLETON MURRY

Eric Gill : Workman and Artist
STORMONT MURRAY

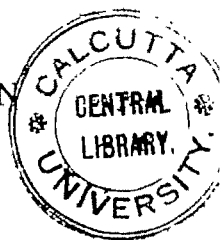
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— THE ADELPHI —

CONTENTS OF VOLUME 24, NO. I : OCTOBER-DE

The Struggle for Freedom: A Commentary ...JOHN MIDDLET	
Between Thirty and Fifty J. L. H	
Demobbed	
Eric Gill: Workman and Artist STORMON	
The Press MONTGOMERY	
Christianity or God?.....A. I	
Chum, You Won't Feel Nothing—	
I'll Say You Don't! ROBE	
Conversation in Egypt D. J.	
From Euripides to Essen DORIS N.	
The Condition of Holland: 1947 J. T. I	
The Solitary N. I	
We Make Their Corn JAME	
Halt for the Progressives ALEXAND	
A Cure for Seasickness RICHARD TI	
Children at Football MALCOLM	
Two Sonnets JOHN LI	
Fulfilment ROSS	
Return PHGEBE	

REVIEWS:

Herbert Read's <i>A Coat of Many Colours</i> HERMANN P.	
Walter Richard Sickert's <i>A Free House! or the Artist as (</i>	
.....RICHAR	
Malcolm Elwin's <i>The First Romantics</i> and	
Hugh I'Anson Fausset's <i>Poets and Pundits</i>	
William G. Bullitt's <i>The Great Globe Itself</i> ...NEVILLE BR	

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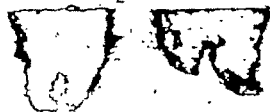
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[INCORPORATING "THE NEW ADELPHI"]



INDEX TO CONTENTS

(VOL. XXIV)
NEW SERIES

17

5/8
05/2
01/3



(October 1947 to September 1948)

OCTOBER-DECEMBER	- -	PAGES	1- 64
JANUARY-MARCH	- -	"	65-128
APRIL-JUNE	- - - -	"	129-192
JULY-SEPTEMBER	- - - -	"	193-256

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INDEX

I—Titles

	Page		Page
<i>A Free Housel</i> by Walter Richard Sickert, reviewed by Richard Murry	55	Editorial	193
<i>Alternative, The</i> , by Oswald Mosley, reviewed by John Middleton Murry	111	Education for Peace (I), by Herbert Read	193
<i>Art and Social Responsibility</i> , by Alex. Comfort, reviewed by Hermann Peschmann	253	Euripides to Essen, From, by Doris N. Dalglish	37
<i>Artist (The) and Society</i> , by Gino Severini, reviewed by Hermann Peschmann	253	Existentialism, by E. L. Allen	157
<i>Autobiography</i> , by Neville Cárdu, reviewed by Sam Walsh	127	<i>First Romantics, The</i> , by Malcolm Elwin, reviewed by F. A. Lea	58
<i>Baltic Eclipse</i> , by Ants Oras, reviewed by J. Hampden Jackson	250	<i>Free Society, The</i> , by John Middleton Murry, reviewed by T. S. Eliot	245
Between Thirty and Fifty, by J. L. Henderson	6	Friend in Need to Katherine Mansfield, A, by John Middleton Murry	218
Birth of the Phasian Bird, by Henry Williamson	199	Germany: October 1947, by J. P. Hogan 77 and 165.	
Caillaux and Flandin, by Montgomery Belgium	232	Gill, Eric: Workman and Artist, by Stormont Murray	13
Christianity or God? by A. R. Vidler	29	<i>Great Globe Itself, The</i> , by William G. Bullitt, reviewed by Neville Braybrooke	61
"Chronicle Writ in Darkness," from a, by Henry Williamson	101	<i>Great Morning</i> , by Osbert Sitwell, reviewed by George Orwell	248
Chum, You won't feel nothing—I'll say you don't! by Robert Seeds	32	Halt for the Progressives, by Alexander South	45
<i>Civilization and Ethics</i> , by Albert Schweitzer, reviewed by John Middleton Murry	124	Hellas and Byzantium, by Anton Logoreci	152
<i>Coat of Many Colours, A</i> , by Herbert Read, reviewed by Hermann Peschmann	53	<i>Luther to Hitler, From</i> , by W. Montgomery McGovern, reviewed by F. A. Lea	175
Commentary, by the Editor	65	<i>Masters of Political Thought</i> , by W. T. Jones, reviewed by F. A. Lea	175
Commentary: Malraux and De Gaulle, by John Middleton Murry	129	Mosley, Oswald, on Style, by Henry Williamson	174
Condition of Holland: 1947, The, by J. T. Brockway	39	<i>Muse's Darling, The</i> , by Charles Norman, reviewed by John le Maistre	256
Conservatism of N. S. Leskov, The, by D. A. Davie	92	Neither Victims nor Executioners, by Albert Camus	135
Conversation in Egypt, by D. J. Enright	34	Poems, by N. L. Bright, 42; by J. T. Brockway, 89; by Charles Causley, 223; by Joyce Chadwick, 242; by Charles Edward Eaton, 228; by I.F.G., 91; by Margaret Greig, 222; by Michael Hamburger, 243; by Phoebe Hesketh, 52; by T. H.	
Coolka, by Robert Seeds	163		
<i>Cosmic Shape, The</i> , by Ross Nichols & James Kirkup, reviewed by J. G. Braine	189		
Cure for Seasickness, A, by Richard Trethewey	48		
Democracy and the Adolescent, by John Atkins	205		

Page	Page
Jupp, 10; by James Kirkup, 227; by John le Maistre, 51; by Stanley Mason, 73; by Malcolm Neville, 50; by Ross Nichols, 51; by John Normanton, 172; by Roy Porter, 146; by Vernon Scannell, 84; by C. Busby Smith, 83; by Rosemary Thomas, 241; by Raymond Tong, 224; by Ben Vincent, 226.	Shorter Notices 190 Struggle for Freedom, The: A Com- mentary, by John Middleton Murry <i>Struggle for the World</i> , by James Burnham, reviewed by Neville Braybrooke 179 <i>There is a Spirit in Europe</i> , by Frank Thompson, reviewed by X 121 Tim'rous Beastie, by F. Grice 229 To Bid the Dead Goodnight, by A. G. Badenoch 109 <i>Turnstile One</i> , reviewed by Charles Causley 252 Two London Saints, by Ruth Collins 85 Universities To-day, The, by Michael Polanyi 98 <i>Van Gogh, Vincent</i> , by W. Muenster- berger, reviewed by Richard Murry <i>Voyage to Berbera</i> , by Alec Glasfurd, reviewed by Charles Causley 187 We Make their Corn, by James Farrar 43 <i>Web and the Rock, The</i> , by Thomas Wolfe, reviewed by J. G. Braine... 185 Welcome to Australia, by Charles Causley 160
<i>Poets and Pundits</i> , by Hugh I'Anson Fausset, reviewed by F. A. Lea ... 58 Press, The, by Montgomery Belgian Problem of Pascal, The, by F. McEachran 147	
<i>Question of Henry James, The</i> , by F. W. Dupee, reviewed by H. P. Collins 181	
Reply to Mr. Murry, A, by J. B. Pick Retreat in Poetry, The, by John Atkins 183 Return, The, by Alexander Pismieny <i>Russian Idea, The</i> , by Nicolas Berdyaev, reviewed by F. A. Lea... 117	
<i>Schweitzer, Albert</i> , by George Seaver, reviewed by John Middleton Murry 124	

II—Authors

Allen, E. L.: Existentialism 157	Collins, H. P.: F. W. Dupee's <i>The Question of Henry James</i> 181
Atkins, John: The Retreat in Poetry 183, Democracy and the Adolescent, 205.	Collins, Ruth: Two London Saints... 85
Badenoch, A. G.: To Bid the Dead Goodnight 109	Dalglish, Doris N.: From Euripides to Essen 37
Belgian, Montgomery: The Press 21; Caillaux and Flandin 232.	Davie, D. A.: The Conservatism of N. S. Leskov 92
Braine, J. G.: Thomas Wolfe's <i>The Web and the Rock</i> 185, Ross Nichols' and James Kirkup's <i>The Cosmic Shape</i> 189.	Eaton, Charles Edward: Poem 228
Braybrooke, Neville: William G. Ballitt's <i>The Great Globe Itself</i> 61, James Burnham's <i>Struggle for the World</i> 179.	Eliot, T. S.: John Middleton Murry's <i>The Free Society</i> 245
Bright, N. L.: Poem 42	Enright, D. J.: Conversation in Egypt 34
Brockway, J. T.: The Condition of Holland: 1947 39, Four Poems 89.	Farrar, James: We Make their Corn 43
Camus, Albert: Neither Victims nor Executioners 135	G., I. F.: Poem 91
Causley, Charles: Welcome to Australia 160, Alec Glasfurd's <i>Voyage to Berbera</i> 187, Poem 223, <i>Turnstile One</i> 252.	Greig, Margaret: Two Poems 22
Chadwick, Joyce: Three Poems 242	Grice, F.: Tim'rous Beastie 229
	Hamburger, Michael: Three Poems Henderson, J. L.: Between Thirty and Fifty 6
	Hesketh, Phoebe: Poem 52
	Hogan, J. P.: Germany: October 1947 77 and 165.

	Page		Page
Jackson, J. Hampden: Ants Oras's <i>Baltic Eclipse</i>	250	Orwell, George: Osbert Sitwell's <i>Great Morning</i>	248
Jupp, T. H.: Poem	10	Peschmann, Hermann: Herbert Read's <i>A Coat of Many Colours</i> 53, Gino Severini's <i>The Artist & Society</i> and Alex. Comfort's <i>Art & Social Responsibility</i> 253.	
Kirkup, James: Poem	227	Pick, J. B.: A Reply to Mr. Murry 173	
Le Maistre, John: Two Sonnets 51, Charles Norman's <i>The Muse's Darling</i> 256.		Pismieny, Alexander: The Return... 211	
Lea, F. A.: Malcolm Elwin's <i>The First Romantics</i> and Hugh T'Anson Fausset's <i>Poets and Pundits</i> 58, Nicolas Berdyaev's <i>The Russian Idea</i> 117, W. T. Jones's <i>Masters of Political Thought</i> and W. Mont- gomery McGovern's <i>From Luther to Hitler</i> 175.		Polanyi, Michael: The Universities Today	98
Logoreci, Anton: Hellas & Byzan- tium	152	Porter, Roy: Poem	146
McEachran, F.: The Problem of Pascal, ...	147	Read, Herbert: Education for Peace (I)	193
Mason, Stanley: Five Poems	73	Scannell, Vernon: Poem	84
Murray, Stormont: Eric Gill: Work- man and Artist	13	Seeds, Robert: Chum, You won't feel nothing—I'll say you don't! 32, Cooka 163.	
Murry, John Middleton: The Struggle for Freedom: A Com- mentary I, Commentary 65, Oswald Mosley's <i>The Alternative</i> 111, George Seaver's <i>Albert Schweitzer</i> and Albert Schweitzer's <i>Civilization and Ethics</i> 124, Com- mentary: Malraux and De Gaulle 129, Editorial 193, A Friend in Need to Katherine Mansfield 218.		Smith, C. Busby: Poem	83
Murry, Richard: Walter Richard Sickert's <i>A Free House!</i> 55, W. Muensterberger's <i>Vincent van Gogh</i> 119.		South, Alexander: Halt for the Progressives	45
Neville, Malcolm: Poem	50	Thomas, Rosemary: Three Poems ... 241	
Nichols, Ross: Poem	51	Tong, Raymond: Poem	224
Normanton, John: Poem	172	Trethewey, Richard: A Cure for Seasickness	48
		Vidler, A. R.: Christianity or God? 29	
		Vincent, Ben: Two Poems	226
		Walsh, Sam: Neville Cardus's <i>Autobiography</i>	127
		Williamson, Henry: from "A Chronicle Writ in Darkness" 101, Oswald Mosley on Style 174, Birth of the Phasian Bird 199.	
		X: Frank Thompson's <i>There is a Spirit in Europe</i>	121

THE ADELPHI

VOLUME 24

NUMBER 1

OCTOBER-DECEMBER 1947

The Struggle for Freedom: A Commentary

JOHN MIDDLETON MURRY

The economic crisis, by the time this appears, will be visibly upon us. Events move so swiftly now that by that time we may be able to judge not only the mental reaction to Mr. Attlee's new orders, but the real reaction to them: which is infinitely more important. Almost certainly the orders themselves will be inadequate*. The British people are very far from being prepared either for the policy or the exertions which are required if the situation is to be saved. In financial terms all we can expect from Mr. Attlee is a series of orders cutting expenditure so as to postpone the moment when the dollar loan is completely exhausted. Our monthly drawings on the American dole are to be diminished. That will mean the beginning of hardship: but only the beginning.

Unless positive measures are taken to increase production—and these can be taken only by the citizens of democracy as a whole—the mere diminution of imports from America will only tend to inflation. There will be less goods for money to buy. To avoid it either the money must be diminished: that is, there must be a wholesale reduction in wages and incomes, which will certainly not improve matters: or the incomes must be stabilized and production increased. The latter is the only way to prevent a grave decline in the standard of living, accompanied by such a

pre-emptive
1948
widespread sense of injustice as will endanger the life of any government. The nine men and women who will not have been able to obtain Council houses will detest the government which has arbitrarily endowed one family. If Mr. Bevan imagines that his housing programme will go cheerfully forward, under the conditions which now threaten us, he is very stupid.

The New English Weekly, whose comments on the developing situation have been remarkable for their penetration, set out the essential facts of the crisis with admirable lucidity on July 31:—

For the recovery, not to say improvement, of the British standard of living, the official and generally accepted plan centres upon exports. But augmented exports depend on the digging of more coal here, which is unlikely to happen for various reasons, which all boil down to the psychological one that few of us like doing it at all, and those not much. Nor is the desire to do it at all likely to be strengthened, but will probably be weakened by the modifications we are making in our social structure and national education. Whether these developments are advisable is not here the question; they proceed from motives of indispensable social idealism, as well as from some mistaken ideas. But it is a true saying that no one genuinely wills a specific end unless he also wills the means of attaining it. And in this case, the end—social betterment based on bigger exports—can be obtained only by the given means, which is coal-heaving. *Ergo*, we must either generate more will to coal-winning or we must give up our scheme of betterments. The only third alternative would be to base our aims for betterment upon as much foreign trade as is attainable on our present coal-supply, and to augment

*This safe prophecy has been only too well justified by the event.

this insufficiency by producing more wealth from our home resources. And this, besides its economic advantage, would be of happy augury for our peace.

With that I entirely agree; and I for one would gladly accept all the very revolutionary adjustments which that policy involves.

But here I am going to follow a train of thought which starts from the fundamental fact "that few of us like digging coal at all, and those not much," viewed from the new perspective opened to us by the discovery of new sources of energy.

We are in the thick of the crisis. It is common knowledge that if the coal-miners would win, as they could if they would, forty million more tons of coal a year, the economic and political position of Britain would be immeasurably improved. But, even though we are immersed in the short-range problem, it behoves us victims of the historical consciousness to look ahead. The coal age is passing: already oil and hydro-electricity are perhaps as important as coal: the age of atomic energy is near. Twenty years more—a generation at the outside—at a reasonable guess, and coal will have become a quite subsidiary source of power for industrial production. The problems the new source of energy will create are so illimitable and overwhelming that an instinctive conspiracy of silence about them has begun. But thirty years—though I shall not see the end of them—is an incredibly short space of time in human history. Thirty years ago—1918—even to me is as yesterday. It may be that the marked disinclination of the British miners to dig coal is a working of the *Zeitgeist*: a manifestation of "the prophetic soul of the wide world dreaming of things to come."

Of course, this means the end of a chapter in the history of Britain and the world: the end of that industrial supremacy that was built

on cheap coal. Perhaps it also means an end of something subtler than an economic hegemony. For I cannot but remember how vividly and despairingly D. H. Lawrence, when he returned to his home in the Derby coalfields in 1918-19, was conscious of a void in the hearts and lives of the miners. The old pride in being a race apart, he felt, was departed; gone the old sense of being a manly brotherhood in a warm, dark, dangerous and elemental world. He—or part of him—wanted the miners to make a revolution which, he thought, though it might have been more brutal, would have been more generous and rich than the piecemeal revolution of what William Morris called "gas-and-water" Socialism; and I remember his saying, with the grim humour of a deeply disappointed man, that the miners' revolution had been bought off by "cheap flannel trousers."

As often, I did not realize the full significance of what Lawrence was saying. My background was so different from his. His inexhaustible stories of his boyhood and *Sons and Lovers* gave me a vivid imaginative idea of the atmosphere of the life of a miner and his family: but there is a gulf between imaginative and first-hand experience, and the life from which Lawrence had emerged always remained strange and remote to me, so that I could not understand the despair he felt at what struck him as the emasculation of the miners—of which the abandonment of pit-corduroys for flannel trousers was a symbol. This "civilization" of the proud, earth-dwelling, alien tribe was one of the things which made Lawrence decide that England was finished, and sent him on his restless journey through the world to find a home.

How much prophetic truth was there in this premonition of his? It

is beyond my power to say; but I have the feeling that there was more than I was aware of at the time. The loss of manhood, as Lawrence judged it to have been, may have been inevitable; it may have been "a necessity of history" that the miners should be absorbed into the modern mass-civilization, and that the root of their lives should no longer be in the darkness and comradeship of the pits: just as the rich, vivid, brutal yet human life of other sections of the nineteenth century proletariat has had to come into line. I think of the London costers of the 1890's as I knew them; of the brickfield workers in trying to manage whom Max Plowman as a young man was occupied; of the old steel-workers described in Harry Brierley's *Steel-making*. Looking back they appear as fiercely independent savage tribes with a culture of their own. Of these tribes the miners were chief.

But it now seems to me that it is perhaps true that the greatness of nineteenth century England depended on their fierce energies, their untamed pride, their glory in physical endurance for its own sake. All this rich, seething, variegated life was behind the upsurge of industrial England. Those who have been through the baptism of Marxism are always tempted to see the machine itself as the dynamic power. But in those days the machine had not yet conquered man; it was still the giant tool with which he grimly wrestled—as a sort of fellow-demon. It had not yet devitalized him.

No doubt, the word "devitalization" begs a huge question. It seems to stand in man's destiny that he shall be thus "devitalized." To hanker after the crude vitality of industrial and Victorian England is just as vain as it is to look back longingly to the pre-industrial society. And, as far as one can tell,

the immediate future is, one in which the process of "devitalization" will go on at an incommensurably greater speed, as the new sources of non-human energy are increasingly tapped. But an obstinate instinct warns me that the physical and spiritual structure of man, as we have known it, depends upon the use of his own body as a prime source of energy. That is, so to speak, a natural control, which being abolished, he will become insane. Again the words—natural, and insane—beg all the great questions. A profound and revolutionary biological mutation of the human type may be at hand: what appears to me—"here on this bank and shoal of time"—as insanity may be the coming norm.

Can it last long, as a norm? Must not mankind, in this condition, be impelled by the lack of a self-operative control to its own mass-destruction? For his own self-destruction, man has now all the appliances and means to boot: and nothing whatever to prevent him from using them—neither the automatic physical control of which I have spoken, nor the spiritual or moral control which full consciousness might apply.

Speculative anticipations quite apart, it seems to me the plain and incontrovertible fact that man has entirely lost control of his own experience, and his destiny. "Lost control" is perhaps a loose expression, since it suggests that previously he did control them. He did not. But he was controlled by Nature, in such a way that he could do no massive and irreparable harm to the race. The need for physical toil occupied his energies. Even up to a hundred years ago, I suppose, the sources of energy other than his own physical toil available to man were only a tiny percentage of the whole: and most of the additional ones—the strength of horses and oxen, winds and tides—

were as relatively harmless as his own physical strength.

It is the habit of us moderns, in our complacent blinkers, to think of bygone times as ages of savagery; but they were really havens of blissful peace compared with ours. No doubt a good deal of killing and plundering went on. But it amounted only to a tiny fraction of human activity as a whole. Ninety-nine per cent. of man's energy and activity was necessarily absorbed in winning a livelihood from the earth, or performing the tasks which are ancillary to that. All the dramatic and memorable activities of man, with which the history books are filled—even his literature and architecture—were merely marginal. What was there to plunder, except a few highly portable luxuries?

I incline to think this material control of man by Nature was more real and important than any moral control in preventing any outbreak of mass-insanity. Mass-insanity was impossible. Nature kept man's nose to the grindstone. But now that man has to a large extent got control of Nature, there is really nothing to prevent him, and nothing does prevent him, from behaving like a lunatic—a homicidal maniac who has overpowered his keeper. I am not accusing man of being essentially lunatic: I am only suggesting that his comparative sanity in the past was not his own achievement but was imposed upon him by Nature. That control gone, man becomes entirely incalculable. Nature subordinated to him, and turned by his terrifying ingenuity into a source of energy incommensurably greater than he has ever possessed, man is "liberated"—into what?

It seems to me the answer is: Into a vast nothingness, or chaos. I am beginning to suspect that that is what man really is, when released from the controls of

Nature. Our current and habitual conception of man, being based on long æons of human behaviour under the control of Nature may have no relevance at all to the "liberated" creature of the same name, and apparently the same species. It is appalling to me, for instance, that man (so far as I can tell) is supremely indifferent to any effort to ensure his own survival: that the human race is blithely indifferent to its own existence. But I have a queer suspicion that my horror is out of date. It belongs to the epoch of man's rationality: a rationality not his own achievement, but enforced upon him by circumstance. That enforced rationality gone, why not go hell for leather towards race-suicide? Or to something equally terrible, the obliteration of the human conscience?

Why not? This situation is, by the nature of the case, essentially unthinkable. In order to think at all, we have to employ discipline or self-control. Lawless thinking is chaos. And I suspect that it was the endeavour to think the unthinkable which made H. G. Wells's last book so strangely incoherent. *Mind at the end of its Tether*—the title corresponds to experiences which have begun to visit me. The human race is at the end of its tether. Has it even snapped the rope? The new social remedy, the new philosophy, the new religion, which has emerged to offer a new order in the chaos—namely, Communism—is in fact Chaos itself, the Anarch enthroned.

Oh, they mean well—these Communists, all over the world. They mean to create Order. Only at the centre of the Order is the pure essence of Anarchy. These wise guys of the Kremlin—what are they after? Nothing, nothing at all, in the last analysis, but Power. Power for what? Power to impose more Order to obtain more Power

to impose more Order to obtain more Power to . . . ? It is the arch-insanity: the specious self-delusion, whereby the liberated chaos of man marches, in ranks, to perfect Anarchy.

There is no escape from Anarchy, except by man developing a principle of order in himself, as firm as that control which came to him from Nature. The fearful falsity of Communism is that it makes men not more, but less capable of developing a principle of order in themselves. For the only principle of order is that which derives from the responsibility of freedom. The rulers of the Kremlin, like the Grand Inquisitor in Dostoevsky's legend, are busy in taking away from men the "intolerable burden of freedom"—and responsibility. They are taking away from man his humanity: conditioning a race of insect-men.

~But what if the societies of men are based on the principle of freedom and responsibility cannot continue to exist, because their members are, in fact, incapable of freedom and responsibility? That is the grim possibility which our minds are now compelled to entertain. The cause of Britain's crisis is, in the last analysis, simply this: that the citizens of British democracy do not behave responsibly. The Government, the Opposition, organized Labour, the organized employers, millions of men in every walk of life have so far failed to think or act with a sense of responsibility to the commonweal. It is thus in Britain; it is still worse in France.

The possibility that democracy cannot make the grade is one which must now be present to the mind of every thinking man. It should by now be obvious to him that democracy in Britain flourished and developed to its present logical completion in the conditions of an expanding economy, in which

political freedom was simply the corollary of unrestrained economic individualism, as it is now in U.S.A. Now Britain has to face an indefinite period of retracting economy, in which economic individualism must bring not prosperity, but disaster; and it has to meet this situation with its worker-citizens indoctrinated with a conception of social justice which is quite as false as it is true. It can be summed up as the idea of more rights and less duties. More rights—that is just: less duties—that is unjust, and preposterous. The only way in which a democracy can achieve greater social justice, and remain a democracy, is by accepting greater social discipline. In a free society, this discipline must be accepted voluntarily, or the society will cease to be free, because the discipline will have to be imposed.

That is the question. Is democracy capable of self-discipline? Unless it is, Communism is, ultimately, inescapable. That does not mean that Communism will be any the less a disaster to humanity. It is simply the form of social organization which will overtake mankind, in the era of mechanical power, because of its incapacity to bear the burden of freedom. In that case a great and on the whole a noble epoch of the human adventure will come to an inglorious and humiliating end. For the free society, no matter what may it owe to past economic prosperity, is the culmination of a great spiritual quest—the striving after freedom. It was, after all, the spread of freedom—intellectual and political—which enabled the free societies to develop the inventions on which the modern industrial world is founded: and it is the adoption of those techniques by the unfree societies—Germany and Japan—which has already plunged the

world in two disastrous wars. Their adoption by another unfree society—Russia—may well plunge it into another. And that has immensely increased the difficulties of the free societies in solving their problem of their own political and social adjustment to the techniques which they have invented. The last war, by providing American capitalism with a vast outlet for its production, has given the obsolete individualism of U.S.A. a new lease of life; by destroying the accumulated wealth of Britain, it has at the same time taken away the margin for trial and error in our effort to realize a free society in which individualism is surpassed. Thus war has immensely complicated the problem of the free society, and given it—in the overwhelming preponderance and prosperity of U.S.A.—a regressive bias.

All this darkens the horizon. But we must not suffer ourselves to forget that the whole of the technological civilization of today is the creation of the freedom of the free societies; or that the terrible urgency of its problem has been precipitated by the adoption of the techniques of the free society by the unfree societies. Soviet Russia

has added nothing to the achievement or the corporate tradition of the free societies: her contribution is only a vast weight of regressiveness, far more massive than that of the U.S.A. Soviet totalitarianism represents the massive degradation of the impulse to freedom by means of its own techniques—it is Science destroying the conditions of its own existence. Ultimately, if human rationality is a condition of the survival of the human species, the regressiveness of Soviet Russia must fail, by the degradation of the human material on which its power depends. By the same token, ultimately the free society must reassert itself as the only social medium in which a technological civilization can be sustained. But ultimately is a long-run conception. It is the short-run which matters to us all. Unless the free societies can demonstrate the practicability of freedom *now*, by showing that free men can freely take responsibility—that the burden of freedom is not only not intolerable, but the gladly accepted condition of *human* life, as distinct from insect existence, it will be only out of darkness and chaos that freedom will be reborn—if at all.

Between Thirty and Fifty

J. L. HENDERSON

These reflections are based on one simple assumption, namely that it is primarily though not exclusively the responsibility of men and women now between the ages of thirty and fifty to save European civilization by their actions and perhaps the world by their example. This means men and women born between 1897 and 1917, whose adolescence belongs to the period 1911 to 1931, some of whom are

survivors of the First World War, many of whom grew up during that war and the years immediately following it, a number of whom passed from puberty to manhood and womanhood in the uneasy years preceding the Second World War.

Such a background of crisis might suggest the very opposite of my assumption, but I shall try to show that the age-groups falling

before or after this period are, again with obvious exceptions, even less fitted for the role of salvagers than these other contemporary companions of catastrophe. Whether even they can successfully play their parts depends on the degree to which they are dynamically conscious of their experience.

The majority of Europeans, who are older than fifty to-day, suffer from the following handicap: the entire length of the most formative period of their lives belongs to a pre-crisis age. Within the different nations of Europe a certain pattern of society still persisted, sufficiently powerful to offset the constant anarchy of the Balkans, to cloak the revolutionary ferment of Russia, to discount the remote if distasteful mutterings of nationalism in the Middle and Far East, and still to smile tolerantly at the gawkiness of the Yankee: it was a society which could still close its ears to the prophets of its own doom like Marx, Nietzsche and Freud. These people stiffened into a mould; the rigidity of which all subsequent disaster could not alter; a mould which either had to be broken, as for example in the Russian Revolution or on the battlefields of the Western Front, or which remained intact and was the fortress of those old men who "crept out to make the peace" of Versailles. Their response to the historical challenge of the age was inadequate at every level, psychological, economic and political.

The majority of Europeans, who are younger than thirty to-day, suffer from different though equally strong handicaps. The oldest of them, born in 1917, could not at the earliest have begun to take significant notice of their total environment until about 1930: in the year of Munich the oldest of them was just twenty-one; they were all of them as a matter of cool fact not responsible for the débâcle of 1939. Yet on the one hand they

were exposed to the apathy of their parents and their utter inability to educate their children for the chaos into which the world year by year was patently drifting. In the 'twenties their older brothers and sisters were fixated as "bright young things" or unemployed on the dole or twisted survivors of the starvation horror of Germany and Central Europe as well as of the U.S.S.R. In the 'thirties they witnessed these same seniors passively or actively preparing for war, and it is doubtful which was the more damning psychologically, the martial fanaticism of Balilla and Hitler Jugend, the soft decadence of a cynical "Jeunesse" or the wilful blindness of the young English ostrich.

Both of these age-groups have been blistered by the Second World War without being sufficiently and meaningfully enough engaged in it to understand it. No wonder that to-day both groups are in the grip of a paralysis, the first permanently, the second until those unfortunate conditions are changed to the extent of providing a situation, the challenge of which is neither too overwhelming to discourage nor too weak to stimulate: at present it is bound to produce only a response of cynicism, apathy or escapism among the ardent young.

Now let me turn to myself and you, men and women between thirty and fifty: do we accept this analysis and its implications for us? It is no use our resenting the actions and attitudes of our immediate seniors and juniors; they are dependent on our response to the present world situation, the history of which it is our privilege to know. To know it we have to take part in it, to comprehend it we have to stand away from it, to learn wisdom from it we have to suffer with it. These criteria most of us can satisfy. Whether we like it or not, we participate in the travail of

our times, be it in shopping-queues, food-riots, scientific research or the less dramatic exercise of moral and political rights and duties. The oldest of our age-group came of age in 1918, the youngest in 1938: the former bore some responsibility for the aftermath of the First World War, the latter for the prelude to the Second World War. Some of us were heavily involved in the economic crisis of 1929, many of us made the choice, crudely or elegantly, between guns and butter: we were for or against Intervention in the Spanish Civil War, we believed in Sanctions or disapproved of them, we witnessed the opening of the Sino-Japanese War: we became Nazis or Communists or drifted to Munich. Many of us fought in the Second World War, a few abstained. We all knew and know that fatal sense of drift in which Europe has become involved and which spreads like a blight over the rest of the world. We have all been caught in the tragic dilemma of action which is wrong and non-action which is equally wrong. We have taken part in and are taking part in "the notable spectacle of our public death."

But we have also stood away from this process: we are neither too old nor too young to be unable, anyhow for short periods, to objectify our subjective experiences. We can observe certain phenomena such as the decay of dogmatic Christianity, the irresponsible arrogance of science, the suicidal tendencies of nationalism, the discovery of the individual and collective unconscious, the arrival in our time of "One World." These are hard facts which only stubborn ignorance and prejudice prevent us from accepting. We can study the performance of man's political creeds—his Conservatism, Liberalism, Socialism and Totalitarianism.

This criterion of historical comprehension we can also satisfy.

What of the third? Have we suffered sufficiently with our history to learn wisdom from it? We have suffered, even more than our seniors and juniors, but our main problem is that we have not suffered consciously enough. Whether the wounds inflicted on us were in battle or in concentration camp, in bombed city or famine-stricken countryside, we have not been able so far to discover a meaning in our pain or to relate it to the rest of our lives. That is because we have an inadequate notion of the nature and destiny of man. The sum-total of our reaction even to deep and personal injury is to say, "How dreadful—how appalling!" and then to succumb to the prevailing sense of drift.

It is just here that we face our Either/Or: either we continue to drift, wallowing in orgies of escapism and developing more and more deadly neurotic symptoms, or we become aware of the meaning of our suffering and arrest the drift. I believe that we can achieve the second alternative if we are prepared to pay the price—a far heavier one than even the most percipient of us is yet ready to imagine. The conditions of our success are:—

(1) To ask the right questions of ourselves and our contemporaries, remembering that we are ourselves the question. These are spiritual questions, i.e., what are the nature and destiny of man?

(2) To begin an answer to that question at three levels:—

(a) Psychological: Man and the society around him are the incarnation of a divine though not omnipotent purpose, the nature of which may be recognised and worshipped in the processes of love. Co-operation with this purpose leads to the joy of fulfilment,

most often at the price of tragedy; resistance to it spells disaster individually and socially.

(b) Economic: he and his fellows exist to share the produce of one world on the basis of each according to his need, and this means that production must be for use and not for profit, and the use can only be agreed upon and the varying needs assessed by a planning authority whose economic policy is derived from common psychological postulates.

(c) Political: Imbued with the conviction that man's individual and social life is a compound of psychological necessity and economic determinism, redeemed by purposive love, a new political aristocracy may emerge, forerunners of an eventual new society. As these new aristocrats set to work and become aware of each other's existence, they will feel the need of incorporating their beliefs in some form of institution and creed. Around the personality of one or more of these numbers will gather a new myth, a story intelligible to the masses of the people but of such a quality that it will have power to meet and defeat any challenge from the coarser totalitarian myths and at the same time rally to itself the groping and semi-paralysed adherents of rationalist humanism. It is then that international schools for children and adults, monastic cases of "the waste land," will be able to sponsor and foster a movement for the supersession of nationalism by the creative as opposed to the destructive dynamic of nationality.

(3) To use the menace of the atom bomb to present the Either/Or in as convincing and dramatic a form as possible to the people of the world.

(4) To do all this by groups permeating existing religious, economic, political and above all educational institutions and refusing to accommodate themselves to the prevailing death-urge: for example to advocate food relief for famine areas as well as to refuse any form of military service; to bring to the cultivation of the soil a new reverence, which combines the wisdom of the old-fashioned farm with the teaching of the latest agricultural science; to refuse support to the promotion of trade warfare between the nations of the world; to refuse to bow down in the house of totalitarianism, but on the contrary to pray in the new temples of devotion, prototypes of which may already be discerned in various educational fields, the service of the Quakers and the consulting-rooms of pastoral psychologists.

This emergent aristocracy will be conscious of its solidarity beyond nations: it will be mainly an aristocracy of vocation, although the elements of breeding and cultural tradition may not be absent. Its embryo is already in existence; I have seen it in the shattered universities of Caen and Hamburg, I have read of it in the books of Maritain, Berdyaev, Mumford and Jung, I have heard it on the lips of hundreds, but not yet thousands, of my contemporaries in many lands. That embryonic aristocracy can and must be born into the world to-day, and we between the ages of thirty and fifty must be its midwife: we have to accept "the burden of the incarnation of new values," and we can only do so if in the face of present woe our terrified imaginations can suffer a new Gethsemane of compassion.

Demobbed

T. H. JUPP

Corporal Arthur Simmons R.E.M.E.
was demobilised, with a gratuity of
one hundred and twenty six pounds
shortly to be paid, a civilian identity card,
suit of clothes, underwear, overcoat
and a large sheaf of important papers.

At last, after four years his young wife
was to be permanently his, the son,
apple of his eye, fruit of an air-raid union,
eve of sailing, would enjoy the benefits
of personal paternal supervision
and the household come into impeccable order.

His old job of electrician would provide a larger wage
than ever in his history of eight and thirty years;
Gladys too had saved well. Henceforward
she would labour no more as a temporary booking clerk.
Her father had died six months back, fortunately
mother continued the tenancy in Willow Walk.

From the railway station Art Simmons walked on air
through a double row of Jehovah's Witnesses
silently holding out their theocratic literature,
cranks, but young Bert ought to think of Sunday School
perhaps at St. Agatha's where the children were clean
though the Baptists of course gave them better treats.

In the approach Art called at the tobacconist's,
no cigarettes, in the High Street
no cigarettes, in the corner shop
of Willow Walk Turkish or Albanian only;
well Gladys must get him some at the grocer's;
a card at the Goat announced, no beer tonight.

Never mind, he for one needed no better cheer
than a brisk fire in the sitting-room grate
these chill September evenings. Bert in bed by eight
Gladys would sit at his feet, upon the rug,
that horrible old skin of her mother's, but comfy
until at eleven she prepared hot drinks with milk.

Art let himself in. Gladys would come by six.
In the coal-shed was no coal so as the kettle
boiled on the gas-ring he warmed his hands.
Mother came in with Bert, in time to save the milk,
unfortunately there was no cake, no biscuits, only bloody marg
and three slices of bacon very wet and gristly.

Impetuously Art told Mother to throw them at the grocer and when advised to do it himself promptly darted straight to the Willow Stores. There a scowling creature said curtly, I have to take whatever I am given; you should know better Mr. Simmons having been in the army, why only last week I gave your ma-in-law a pot of honey.

Art started to mumble about third-rate shopkeepers profiteers and under-the-counter; a big blonde woman who used to be a good-looker and smile at Art said gently, I did not think you were the rough sort, Mr. Simmons and handed him a bag containing a half-pound box of chocolates, Art smiled, said he was sorry, and toddled home.

Gladys came in tired, but tactlessly chose the first evening to make revelation of sundry outstanding debts totalling forty-two pounds, as well as wireless push-cart and sewing-machine luckily acquired on instalments, outlined a number of necessary replacements, things she must have. Art felt very old and well browned off.

For breakfast there was no bacon nor even cereal only a pasty, unappetising, compound sausage and not enough of that. Art was glad when the wife went off to work, already he saw clearly she must hold her job; many things were needed by winter; the little car must wait at least a year.

He lunched out, to save Glad's old girl cooking and in the hope of filling the strange void disturbing his innards, but for five shillings received only bean soup, a slice of mutton one potato, canned peas, prunes and powder-custard; in the hotel lounge sat his M.P. just back from Switzerland.

During the afternoon he costed a few tools but finding the result depressing decided to look up a few friends, anyway their wives, in the hope of an evening invitation, the Lebenbaums, who commonly had a rich rabbit stew, the Nottings, who always kept a good table, the Vidlers, who when they ran out of bottled had a cask.

Joe Notting had been in munitions, the factory closing he was now in Birmingham, Lil said, come and see him at the week-end. The Vidlers, who had never done well, were away administering Italy, a cousin had the house. Art remembered him; at the moment he was down on the canal fitting out an antique French crabber for Wellington N.Z.

George Ernson stood on the bank of the decrepit canal cursing the government, all the necessary instruments still being needed for landing craft, coming daily from the slips sixteen months after the finish of war; having no prospects but of four pounds ten, purchasing power two five, George was off to a new land, he needed two hundred more.

At once Art wondered if Glad and he should join in, grow sugar, pineapples, God knows what, so he and his could eat without worry, have a home and freedom. The short railway journey from the dock, costing formerly a penny was now threepence. It annoyed him that the evening paper had gone up, and half the size.

Outside the station stood podgy Lebenbaum vending ice-cream; hot profits and little work; wheeling his cart into an unsavoury yard he took Art to tea into a cosy parlour, behind a bookshop painted red where an ex-miner explained how all difficulties were faults of a system fundamentally corrupt.

Art came out from under the bust of Lenin gone seven, and hurrying home found Glad had liver and onions toothsome fried; with some warmth he kissed her, spoke of the faults of society, the advantages of a new world. Glad only laughed saying they had a nice assistant station-master,

a single man, pal of a butcher and a grocer, the liver indeed due to his friendly intercession. Arthur Simmons cursed, and said he did not hold with such crookery, but went on eating liver, then remembered, and produced the tray chocolates using them as a cover, while he peered in the atlas.

Taking off Bert's shoes Art was amazed at their rubbishy and ruinous condition. Mum has been six times to the shop, your own will take six or seven weeks repairing. The explanation made him mad, he went out slamming the door, Glad went and phoned up the assistant station-master.

Down the road Art ran into Renee Evans, a showy bit and really too common to speak to but he wanted company and took her to the Odeon where they were shown seats, next a young couple, his wife and the assistant station-master; with a revulsion of feeling they at once changed partners.

agreeing heartily that everything was the fault of society, that young Bert must have a better chance, an electrician's wife ought not to work at a station, and if there were no facilities for emigration they would not hesitate to take shares in the crabber for a three-hundred-day honeymoon voyage, out to New Zealand.

Eric Gill: Workman and Artist*

STORMONT MURRAY

In the minds of common or garden humanity, "art" tends to be thought a mystery altogether outside the common round, something "not for the likes of us," and artists a peculiar people mainly concerned in producing "oil paintings" which are brought together in annual exhibitions, and explained, or at least written about by people called "art critics." And in spite of my association with Eric Gill—who, as is well known, spent so much time in "debunking" this notion—I still find it difficult to rid myself of the strange illusion that artists are a class apart. However, in this essay my use of the word art will in fact follow Eric Gill's, as for example, in his use of the quotation "the artist is not a special kind of man but every man is a special kind of artist." For him any use of the word art as something other than good and thoughtful workmanship in all things made—"the making well of whatever needs making"—was to be taken as symptomatic of our decadent civilization. He was painstaking in his reiteration of the simple idea that if we concern ourselves with truth and goodness—with the veracities of conduct, speech, work—the expression, the beauty, the emotion will take care of itself. An

idea which W. R. Lethaby elaborated when he said:—

In concentrating too much on the emotional content in certain chosen forms, as poetry, music, painting, you are firstly beating down other forms of production into non-arts, into mere brute labour; secondly, by isolating those very selected arts themselves too much from service and the common understanding you lay them open to speedy disease and decay. . . . Keep the work, the service, the meaning, strong and healthy, and due expression is bound to be there. Beauty is the flowering of labour and service. . . .

With this warning I will turn to my subject proper, which is Eric Gill the person. If I can convey what kind of *person* he was, his workmanship, his art achievements will, I think, be seen to be the appropriate flowering of his life. In attempting to convey the reality of Eric Gill I will say something of his character, give a skeleton biography as showing a little of the circumstances which were the nursery of such a character, and lastly, I will try to indicate a few of the main strands of his teaching.

§

I knew Eric Gill for a few years only, but found his personality to be so strikingly "all-of-one-piece," of so massive a unity, so free from unrelated expression or loose ends, that from the first I felt it to be both a humbling and a bracing experience to be privileged to meet

*An adaptation of a paper read to The International Arts Centre, London.

a man of integrity, a man of holiness. As it is possible that the word "holiness" conjures up an image of a deadly high-tension seriousness, a fun-less piety, an aloof austerity, perhaps I had better point out at once that this is a modern conception of the word's meaning. Primarily it means hale and hearty, whole, wholesome, healthy, unsullied and therefore gay and light and sweet and cheerful and gracious. But *gay—above all things—gay*. So I hasten to say that ~~Eric~~ Gill was light-hearted, a "good mixer," easy to get along with, charming, humorous and with the gaiety of a man set free from the distressing inner conflicts which inhibit most of us in our being and doing. A visitor to his home at Pigotts in the Chiltern Hills says: "I remember saying to a friend there—'What is strange round here is that it is all *normal*. It is *our* life—in the mill-towns and commercial cities—that is abnormal.' " My own chief impression was similar; to be with Eric Gill, whether at his home or anywhere else, was to feel, for a little while at least, at ease with the good life, recognising it and accepting it as the norm for mankind. For he had the ability, without any jarring signs of affectation, to invest every subject of creation with something like wondering veneration and tenderness. Goodness too often appears stuffy or smug or superior—but even those who met Eric Gill casually, felt at home in the presence of his wholesome and his very human simplicity, and comforted by his shining humility and normality. A hint of my meaning is contained in Middleton Murry's comment:—

His sheer human personality captivated me. . . . I was conscious of him first as a silent figure in a shabby mackintosh at a committee meeting, rolling his own cigarettes from tobacco in an old tin box, and fitting them one by one into a holder. He spoke not a word at the first meeting, and I had no

idea who he was; but I liked his serious way with tobacco. The second time he spoke, and I liked his poised and gentle voice; but still I did not know who he was. The third time we were two days together, and I knew him as Eric Gill . . . he was completely satisfying . . . he opened his mind and his heart, and therein I found the reality of the phrase of Augustine he loved so well—"the tranquility of order." He could speak of high things and deep things with the simplicity of one who saw them face to face. . . . Admiration of Eric Gill could not but pass into affection. . . .

Other tributes confirm this verdict. For instance the two characteristics which chiefly impressed themselves upon Max Plowman, were Gill's humility and his indifference to money-making.

He was (he writes) pre-eminently the artist of his generation who may be said to have worked and taught according to Blake's dogma, "Where any view of Money exists, Art cannot be carried on." In trying to think why he appeared to me such a rare and refreshing soul, I came to the conclusion that it was because the ordinary commercial idea had always been totally foreign to him. His humility was not in the least of the self-conscious self-deprecatory order; it was the humility of a man with a religion: the humility of a man with a philosophy of work. . . . He was ready to take on any kind of work into which he could put his heart, and a great part of his fame is due to the fact that he was always humble enough to do seemingly little things superlatively well. Lettering would have appeared small beer to the Academician of the late nineteenth century. Designing postage stamps or badges for postmen's caps, most eminent painters would have left to the ordinary professional tradesmen. In fact they left them to Eric Gill, and he became famous for making these things beautiful. . . .

And this is a tribute from a much younger brother, Dr. Cecil Gill:—

No one I know was more eager or consistent in the pursuit of truth and at the same time so ready to perceive, allow for and accept as inevitable in our fallen and finite state the relative nature of our apprehension of it. This characteristic truth-seeking seems to me, looking back over some thirty years of developing acquaintanceship with and knowledge of my brother, to have been

the permanent ground of his life from which he took root and by which his life was continually nourished. To most of us there is no whole light of truth by which to see, only a murky gleam, and our definition of sin corresponds to our own imperfect vision. For example, to many people sex, sensuality, all to do with our bodies savours of sin. Eric had a way of pulling down partitions, letting the light in on unsuspected or unacknowledged good things hidden in darkness by blind convention and showing them as in themselves good, because true, and because true and good then beautiful. The same faculty of exposure led him to the debunking of artiness and religiosity and modern industrialism and war.

My own memories of him are many, but among those which stand out are the following. I remember Eric Gill at a birthday party for one of his grandchildren and his singing of folk-songs as a contribution to the family festival. As someone who knows more of music than I do said about his singing: "He could raise a folk-song from a bawling chorus on to planes familiar to Handel and Bach, without losing its quality of good fellowship, chiefly because he valued at their true worth the gracenotes and accidentals which others were inclined to slur . . ." Here again as in everything else he did, he always struck me as exemplifying the extraordinarily ordinary normal man with no "side" or awkward display of unusual ability such as might make one feel ill at ease. Also he was so gentle of manner that I have many a time marvelled that so meek and humble, so frail-seeming a creature should be able to cleave his way through the obstacles which thwart most of us from discovering and fulfilling our vocations. He never fancied himself for being a sculptor any more than a man might fancy himself for being a blacksmith, for, in his view, if this quality we were told to revere as "art" was real, then it must be something that happened in connection with *any good work well*

done. I shall never forget too, the first time I heard him lecture. I make no attempt to summarise the lecture which dealt with Catholic social principles and Unemployment, but introduce the matter here because of the way in which the lecture commenced. Anyone who reads Eric Gill's books cannot fail to notice that, whatever he treats, the subject will be approached in the same orderly way; nothing will be discussed concerning man without first of all a definition being offered of the nature of man—what sort of a creature he is. But for me it was a novel experience to hear a lecture start thus:—

It is absolutely necessary to have principles, that is, things that come first, the foundation of the house. What we want to know is: what principles of common sense are relevant to the matter of human work? What must we think about unemployment?

What must we think because we are human beings? What is the truth about human beings? What sort of people are they? Unemployment is a human problem. It is not a problem about ants or horses. . . .

and so on—in a manner reminding one of Socrates, but of a Socrates who was never far from laughing, with eyes darting points of mischievous gaiety. One of his apprentices has told of Gill's skill as a teacher, of his talent not only for teaching what was true, but for "driving out from people's minds whole cartloads of false ideas and prejudices and putting in their place a new set—not of ideas or prejudices—but of principles on which they could themselves build."

In his relations with us pupils (he proceeds) Mr. Gill took endless trouble. He was always ready to give us his whole attention and service. I believe that all who worked with him will remember this lovable quality in him, that he gave his whole self to anyone who brought him their affairs. . . .

This lovable characteristic was borne in upon me on the last occasion when I saw Eric Gill alive. He was propped up in bed writing

his *Autobiography* and although (as I afterwards realized) conscious of the many things to be done in a very short time, he cheerfully gave me his whole attention concerning the printing of a pamphlet for PAX, the Catholic Pacifist Society of which he was chairman. He was a man who was always working. He had so many kinds of work—sculpture, wood-engraving, lettering, drawing, writing, lecturing, teaching, learning—that he could turn from one to the other and thus find a rest for mind and body. The modern obsession of “leisure” had no enticements for him personally and he saw it as an ugly symptom of the false valuation of work. He was the only one of us who appeared to know what was to befall him—that he was soon to die—and it was a prospect that found him unruffled in his quiet determination to complete a number of jobs which he had promised himself to complete.

His father, the son of a missionary of the London Missionary Society, was born in the South Seas and came to England in 1854. In 1882, Eric, his second child was born in “that shapeless and meaningless mess” called Brighton. The boy’s early education was at a small Brighton school, whose special pride was in football—a fact which probably influenced Eric Gill considerably. He found that there was “beauty” in games, because the player employs the whole of his being, instinctive, emotional and mental, as a unity; and he was never able to see, in after life, why a person’s “work” should not exercise all his or her powers in similar unison.

He was the second of a family of thirteen children (Dr. Cecil Gill, whom I have quoted, being the last born) and his father, after fourteen years as a minister of “The Countess of Huntingdon’s Connexion” was received into the Church of England

in 1897 and ordained by the Bishop of Chichester, the whole family moving to Chichester to live. Eric Gill’s delight at the change from the sprawl of Brighton to the complete and enthralling town of Chichester served to turn his mind to drawing the Cathedral (as a change from railway engines), and after studying drawing and lettering at a local art school he was eventually articled to a London architect. A period of disillusionment and loneliness followed and, largely because he could feel really at home neither in his work nor the universe, he was caught in the agnosticism and socialism of the time. This period, during which he broke loose from all his pastors and masters, runs from 1905 to 1910, but by the latter date he managed to find his vocation as first a letter-cutter and then a sculptor and at the same time to find his philosophical feet. He married at 22, lived first in a workman’s flat in Battersea, later moving to Ditchling with his growing family.

Directly Eric Gill became an artist he was faced with a whole new series of intellectual and spiritual problems. The truthseeker needs must obtain a firm foothold upon the shores of spiritual reality, and the creative artist (for art is intellect controlling æsthetic sensibility) will not rest until he can discover and affirm values, in other words a religion. The essence of religion is the affirmation of absolute values, and Eric Gill believed that absolute values *were* accessible to man’s searching intellect. It was a “necessity of his being” to find a general and trustworthy view of man’s life and meaning which would serve as solid ground on which to build what he afterwards referred to as a “cell of good living in the chaos of the world.” He speaks in his *Autobiography* of the things he escaped from—viz. the Chichester Art School, the Church

of England, Fabian Socialism, the "art racket," etc.—but it was the things he escaped to that mattered. Eric Newton wrote on this:—

Eric Gill once heard a mistress at his school telling one of the masters that he was "easily led." That, as the *Autobiography* makes plain, was the secret of his strength. He was led, as a man is led by signposts, as a man must be led if he is to get anywhere. Gill was never in much doubt about his signposts; and he certainly got somewhere. Gill's signposts meant so much to him that they take on, in his writings, the semi-mystical aspect of revelations. . . . They become texts, rules, commands. Human love as the intensest happiness: good, responsible workmanship as the ultimate duty: religion (in the form of Catholicism) as the only integrating power that can reconcile flesh and spirit—these were his chief signposts. And to offset them a set of signposts which he hated and rejected—industrialism, usury, mechanization, the making of money as opposed to the making of things. . . .

Agnosticism and Fabian Socialism not being "a way, a truth and a life," obviously could not satisfy such a profound hunger of mind and spirit, and so Eric Gill applied the whole vigour of his intellect to formulating a new religion, only to find (as he puts it) that he had "invented the Catholic Church. . . . I found a thing in my mind and I opened my eyes and found it in front of me. You don't become a Catholic by joining the Church; you join the Church because you are a Catholic. . . ." So nine years after his marriage, he, with his wife and family, was received into the Roman Catholic Church—and his personality achieved a newly released freedom and vitality and unity as a result of this, the culminating event of his life. Henceforward his life blossomed and bore fruit in abundance until his death at the age of 58.

From the time he became a Catholic his religion became the frame and focus, the core and the container of his life and work. In Catholic doctrine he recognised with delight the defence and pro-

tection of the human person and in the Church he found the permanent home of personality. Which must not be taken as implying that he was uncritical concerning the slackness and indifference of Catholics generally—once going so far as to write: "I'll swear that if an (impossible) impartial observer, fully informed about Christian theory, were to live among the average of us Catholics, high and low, clerical and lay, going to church and reading our press, etc., for a year, he'd report that we'd 'sold out to the world' . . ."

§

I now turn from the man to his teaching—although in this case it is almost impossible to separate man from message. Great people are so unified that their whole personality is imbued with their essential convictions; they do not have to assert them in separation from themselves, but give them to us as part of their very being.

Eric Gill himself once stressed such a unity when he said of his own life:—

The only thing I have ever gone in for with complete and undiluted enthusiasm is the making of a collation—the putting of things together in what seemed to me their proper order—so that life and work and love and the bringing up of a family and clothes and social virtues and food and houses and games and songs and books should all be in the soup together. And the whole mixture must be properly cooked and sustained by the proper milk of the Word. . . .

Soon after Eric's death a Catholic priest (Monsignor John O'Connor, who served as the living model for G. K. Chesterton's detective, Father Brown) wrote to me:—

One of my earliest recollections of Eric was a puzzled wonder at him sitting half the night on the edge of his bed pertinaciously picking the brains of a Master in Theology about some minute point of ethics or metaphysics. This he harvested later in his clear and compelling arguments about the blunting of the Sword of the Spirit and like topics.

Eric taught me all the things I had never known about art. How it is both consciously and unconsciously balanced, i.e.; limited and guided by its medium. I once after this said I found one of his woodcuts touched the sublime. Just like a bobby arresting me in the King's name, he brought to and made me explain precisely what I meant by saying that. Precisely? I was indeed vague instead. But this does show the working of his mind. He wasn't going to label a bottle until he had ascertained the vintage. He was the child of the Hans Andersen coronation who pointed out: "He's got nothing on." When he saw a photograph of a strenuous action, e.g., Suzanne Lenglen making an impossible return, he undressed it at once in a drawing. This he made a work of piety just as others make piety consist in covering up the nude of every sort of thing, animate or inorganic.

The Editor of *The New English Weekly* further laic bare the character of this revolutionary Christian, when he wrote:—

Gill, who performed a great many of the menial and manual tasks of life in his time, found that every one of them was an art; he realised, better perhaps than any man since that mighty iconoclast Tolstoy, that the universal foundation of art is not in the critical standards of culture or civilisation, but in the things that people do in order to live a human life. When they do these things with love and with the full use of their faculties as free and responsible persons, the things they produce are apt to be beautiful. This thought about art, if rightly presented to any reasonable person, is not so unacceptable. But to know it with such certainty and perspicuity as Gill knew it, is not without terrors to one who lives in Western civilization today. In a society whose distinguishing characteristics and ruling values are money, technological progress and the mass production of commodities, only a very few people can do their appointed work in the spirit of an art. But if every man is an artist by nature, and yet most of them are not allowed to be—for that is what it amounts to—this implies a dangerous repression of human faculty. Gill's worst complaint against the human race as he saw it was, that men were not sufficiently enjoying themselves either by doing what they liked or liking what they did. . . . And the sight of men's lives in a financial and technical civilization often darkened his mind with foreboding.

It is at this point that Eric Gill's

most consistent theme (illustrated in both life and letters) needs stating—viz., his demonstration that the faculty of man as *artist*—in the wider sense that he conceived the word—is not *ornamental* to human society but *vital*; and that the perversion of this faculty is culturally mortal.

Eric Gill's abandonment of Socialism, which has been mentioned, was accompanied by a rejection of political categories for his thinking. He discovered that what concerned him was the working *man* and not the working *class*—and not so much what the working man got *from* working as what he did *by* working. As a Fabian he found that the Socialist Movement was not moved or led, still less could it be said to be inspired, by any ideas of man or man's life or of man's work other than those of the Capitalist world against whose injustices and cruelties it was in revolt. "Socialism as a political movement," he wrote "is hardly more than an attempt to re-order the distribution of factory products and factory profits."

He concluded that no merely political or economic rearrangement of the world would be effective in removing the horrors of Industrialism—and that the remedy must lie in the sphere of religion and morals. He was anti-Industrialist because he believed in the responsibility of the workman, anti-Capitalist because he believed in freedom and saw freedom systematically destroyed by the tyranny of money. It seemed to him "incomparably more horrid that men of business should rule us and impose their foul point of view on the world than it would be if the whole race of men and women should rot their bodies with lechery and drunkenness." To Eric Gill the political programmes of the parties of the Left and the Right were but attempts to apply different

kinds of poultices to a cancer. The basic blasphemy was not questioned or touched in either case—and most certainly not by the mere introduction of a handsome Social Security dole by a Welfare State, which appears to be the pet ambition of our Liberal-Labour reformers.

It was the fact that hardly anyone questioned the assumption that maximum productivity by ever-increased mechanization is the final purpose of human society that provoked Eric Gill's most grim prophecies and warnings.

We think (he writes) we can get riches and plenty by political and scientific and mechanical trickery. Trickery, that's what it comes to. . . . They call it the application of science to industry. It's not. It's the application of science to money-making. And the Christians haven't seen through it. . . . The point is that the whole world has got it firmly fixed in its head that the object of working is to obtain as large an amount of material goods as possible, and that with the increased application of science and the increased use of machinery that amount will be very large indeed, while at the same time the amount of necessary labour will become less and less, until machines being minded by machines, it will be almost none at all. And the point is that this frame of mind is radically un-Christian and anti-Christian . . . therefore contrary to Nature and contrary to God. . . .

and

Democratic capitalist-industrialism is as atheistic, as destructive of responsibility and liberty, of holy poverty and the human person, of hope and love, as is communism itself. . . . But the Socialist movement offered nothing in the way of divine inspiration, nothing beyond the ideal of a world in which we should be hygienically warmed and fed and clad—a sort of B.B.C. culture park. . . . The fascist societies want to create empires and to become as rich and great as others. The communist societies want to make the rich poor in order that the poor may become rich. The Church of God wants to make the rich poor and the poor holy.

But Eric Gill's frequent references to the merits of "holy poverty" must not be misunderstood. He had nothing but condemnation for the grinding poverty of the slum—and

meant a reasonable sufficiency for human life, combined with the necessity and opportunity for creative labour. As he himself pointed out again and again in his writings: "If there is one thing more certain than anything else in the teaching of Christianity, it is the teaching of poverty. To go without, to give up, to lose rather than gain, to have little rather than much—that is its positive teaching. . . . But in spite of all this—in spite of the obvious failure of rich men's politics—we refuse to base our life and work on such teaching. All our politics are founded upon a denial of this gospel." After a visit to Palestine he reached his final judgment in this matter, as revealed in the following paragraph from his *Autobiography*. Concerning "the last of the revelations vouchsafed to me" he writes:—

I saw a vision of all the peoples of the earth struggling ceaselessly with one another for material possessions and material advantages. And I saw that the greater the material success so much the more frightful must be the struggle. For the competition for riches means a ceaseless spurring of men's powers of invention in weapons and methods of destruction, until in the end, as Pope Pius XII said almost immediately after his election: "In this age of mechanization the human person becomes merely a perfect tool in industrial production and . . . a perfected tool for mechanized warfare." And I saw that the only people who lived in holiness and dignity were those who lived in poverty of spirit. Blessed be ye poor; for yours is the kingdom of God. It was in the Holy Land that that lesson had first been taught. It was in the Holy Land that that lesson could still be learned. And it became clear that it is no use renouncing war unless we first of all renounce riches. . . . So I came back from Palestine with my mind made up . . . I must take up a position antagonistic to the very basis of their civilization. For the Christians everywhere have committed themselves to the support of capitalist-industrialism and therefore to wars in its defence, mechanized wars to preserve mechanized living, while I believe that capitalism is ROBBERY, industrialism is BLASPHEMY and war is MURDER. . . .

In fact, Eric Gill saw the pursuit of riches as the beginning of war, and war as the necessary, inevitable, right and proper and logical accompaniment of that pursuit.

As the least difficult way for groups of persons to edge themselves out of reach of the tentacles of the money economy and the paralysing grip of the money value, he recommended the founding of agricultural communities. While well aware of the odds against the material success of such "departures from Babylon" he was frightened to see the stranglehold which the money valuation is gaining in the minds of Western peoples doomed to suffer from the two major social diseases of Industrialism (a disease of work) and Capitalism (a disease of property).

"It is our business to get back to the land as quickly as possible," he wrote, for he realized that the mentality bred in the industrial towns of Britain was slowly but surely turning even agriculture into a mechanical or a merely chemical industry. He saw too that unless drastic measures are taken to counteract this mentality, our civilisation is doomed to perish not only from mass murder but of barrenness and poisoning. And the most alarming sign of the evil effects of industrialism he saw in the latter day tolerance of work as a kind of prostitution, viz., the exertion of man's precious creative skills, *not* as praise to God and service to neighbour, but for the fee forthcoming, for a money payment.

It is a tragic truth that today most men have "jobs" which have little if any intrinsic value to them as such, but which are performed for ulterior motives—first and foremost the earning of a wage. It is not even expected of a workman that he take an intelligent interest in the quality of the product which

will result from his labours—and the idea of a trade union calling a "strike" for the right to make goods of a better quality seems ludicrous. To Eric Gill, as to Ruskin, Morris, Lethaby and others before him—this implied a completely false philosophy of labour, false because untrue to the nature of God and of man. Man, he insisted, is an artist by nature and for that reason his end in view when working must in truth be *the good of the work to be done*. Man should work not in order to earn, but earn in order to be himself, viz., to be able to go on working as that which he is by nature; just as man should eat to be able to go on living, rather than to live in order to go on eating.

Every man has some particular vocation in the fulfilment of which he is meant by God to find the perfection of his individual gifts. "The vocation," to quote Aranda Coomaraswamy, "whether it be that of a farmer or architect, is a function; the exercise of which function as regards man himself, is the most indispensable means of spiritual development, and, as regards his relation to society, the measure of his worth. It is precisely in this way that, as Plato says, 'more will be done, and better done, and with more ease, when everyone does but one thing, according to his genius; and this is justice to each man in himself.' It is the tragedy of a society industrially organised for profit that this justice to each man in himself is denied him; and any such society literally and inevitably plays the Devil with the rest of the world. . . . We ourselves have lost this vocational way of living, the way that Plato made his type of Justice; and there can be no better proof of the depth of our loss than the fact that we have destroyed the cultures of all other peoples whom the withering touch of our civilization has reached. . . ."

The Press

MONTGOMERY BELGION

Despite the scepticism of Conservatives, the appointment of a royal commission to inquire "into the finance, control, management, and ownership" of newspapers is, in one sense, understandable. It has been the traditional policy of the central power in England as elsewhere to oppose the rise of an *imperium in imperio*. The control of any great industry by a few private capitalists is felt to make possible a defiance of the central government as unmistakable as that once attempted by the great nobles or by the papacy.

In theory, the man who buys or starts a newspaper and then conducts it as he pleases is simply exercising the normal freedom of the subject. In fact, although a number of English newspapers are still owned singly, the control of the mass of the daily press has gradually come into the grasp of a handful of men, and if there is any power of the press it is they who wield it. I say "control" and not "ownership," because where control is extensive the "owner," as likely as not, is the public. Apart from the possibility that, in the free acquisition and exercise of power, the men in control may encroach upon the freedom of their fellow-subjects—and Mill is not alone in having assured us that that won't do—such a concentration of power may be viewed as competing with the power of the state. Instances of the exercise of power by newspapers are readily remembered. The publication, for instance, of the Zinoviev letter on the eve of the general election of 1924 does seem to have influenced the result of that election. Moreover, it is not only what has been done but what attempted that can be held to

matter. In 1930 Lord Baldwin was prime minister, and he accused Lord Beaverbrook and the late Lord Rothermere of seeking to oust him from office. The attempt failed, but that it should have been made is significant. It is freely alleged that a newspaper, being able to suppress, distort, colour, and emphasize the information it disseminates, may do so in favour of sectional interests which are not identical with those of the community. When the government decided to nationalize the Bank of England and certain large industries, it was actuated, in part at least, by the desire to arrest a concentration of power by private interests within the state. It is therefore not surprising that the newspaper industry has now provoked its scrutiny.

But the problem presented by the press and its present control is peculiar. It may be doubtful if nationalization can ever be an effective and satisfactory remedy, but at least nationalization of the Bank of England and of certain large industries has been perfectly feasible. The nationalization of the press, on the other hand, is not to be thought of for a moment. In any event, the problem is complicated by the presence of other factors which put any simple or straightforward solution out of court. Undeniable as the power of the men who control the press may be, it is easily taken too seriously, and there is the danger that other threats to the health of the press will grow without being recognized.

The appointment of a royal commission was asked for by a delegate meeting of the National Union of Journalists—the trade union of the editorial workers on newspapers. Later the union submitted to the commission a memorandum which, together with other written evi-

dence, has been officially published.* The union did not make any recommendations of its own. The memorandum contains "a number of constructive suggestions" which have come before meetings of the union and it has discussed. These fall into three categories. Some have to do with ownership and advertisements. Others are concerned with the status of editors and their staffs. A third category embraces those suggestions that deal with the relations of newspapers to the public, either as regards the collection and treatment of "news" or as regards the promotion of sales.

The principal suggestion about ownership is that it should be made illegal to form a monopoly. But the union has neglected to point out at what stage a monopoly should be considered injurious and so made illegal. It is futile to condemn monopoly in itself. As C. P. Scott once wrote, every single newspaper "is of necessity something of a monopoly." Every newspaper is the channel through which news, or, rather, a selection of news, is conveyed to that newspaper's public. Thus, if newspapers are to survive, it cannot be all monopolies that must be condemned. Obviously, there is a difference in the power open to being exercised by the man who controls but a single newspaper and the man who controls a hundred newspapers. But then so there is between the man who controls a London daily selling in millions and the man who controls, say, one of two weekly newspapers in a smallish provincial town. Yet the former might be a man of sterling public spirit and the latter irresponsible. Some distinctions are necessary, and the union does not seem to have stopped to think of them.

Other suggestions passed on to

the commission by the union suffer from a same superficiality. Editors, according to one of them, should not receive something called "improper directives." Presumably, the "directives" (*anglice*, directions) are given by the controller. But why should an editor be supposed less fallible than a controller? In one instance, that of the *Daily Telegraph*, the man in control, Lord Camrose, is also the editor, exactly as that invariable standard of reference, C. P. Scott, was the editor of the *Manchester Guardian* at the same time as he owned it. If the man who controls a newspaper may be capable of editing it, why should he not direct its editing by someone else? The matter is merely one of nomenclature, and it could hardly be contended that the mere title of editor is enough to confer on a man that splendid impartiality which Bentham imagined an editor could maintain provided he looked upon his office as that of presiding a tribunal of public opinion. That would be as naïve as the picture Milton draws in the *Areopagitica* of the learned men of the country unanimous in the pursuit of truth so long as they were not affronted by the necessity of obtaining a licence to publish their writings. No one is made less fallible than his fellows in being named an editor.

A further suggestion passed on by the union is that of remedying "improper interference with the conscience of reporter and correspondent." The subject is delicate. Sir Philip Gibbs tells in his autobiography, *The Pageant of the Years*,* that while on the editorial staff of the *Daily Express*, he was told one day by Arthur Pearson, the founder of that journal: "I want you to write a set of articles proving that Bacon was the author of the so-called Shakespeare plays."

* Stationery Office, 1s. 6d.

* Heinemann, 1946.

Sir Philip replied, he says: "I'm afraid I can't write those articles. I don't believe in the Baconian theory. It's all nonsense." Pearson would not entertain the objection. "A journalist writes from a brief," he said. Sir Philip Gibbs did not agree, and he walked out of the *Express* office. In any similar instance, where a reporter, correspondent, or contributor, is asked to write what he is convinced is nonsense, and he thinks nonsense wrong, it would seem no course was open to him but to refuse. To the credit of the owner of a chain of newspapers in the United States who often demanded a piece of unsavoury reporting, it has been asserted that no man on his staff was ever asked to act against his conscience. But then—so it was added—he could always find plenty of men ready to do his dirty work. Certainly that a journalist should have to choose between losing his job and betraying his integrity is preposterous.

Yet for a newspaper to lack all editorial policy may be for it to disappoint the expectation of readers, and where there is an editorial policy the individual writer of leading articles cannot write solely according to his private opinions. An editor may discuss policy with his leader-writers, but before a leader is written agreement is essential. What applies to leaders applies also to headings and the selection of news. "Comment is free, but facts are sacred." C. P. Scott's aphorism has been often quoted. But it was also he who said that the collection and dissemination of news is "all a matter of selection." Since selection there has to be, presumably it is best done according to some rule. The rule commonly observed in the editorial rooms of English newspapers at present is the reconciliation of several "interests," certainly not those of the men in control and

of their advertising clients alone. For one thing, it is a rule of "news value," which, being translated, means of "best selling value." On top of that, it would look as if many editorial workers on newspapers were not in the least squeamish at what they are asked to do. Popular journals are prone to imagine their public afflicted, in the words of Charles Kingsley, with a prurience to read personal gossip, especially concerning the private lives of the notorious.

It is in the United States that the pretence originated on the part of city editors and their reporters that a newspaper has "the duty" to its readers of obtaining the ingredients of this gossip or scandal. If talk in, say, New York should allege that a prominent actor or novelist is, for instance, seeking a divorce, he and his wife will be visited by reporters. These may be content to ask the name of a lawyer who, if the talk is correct, will be preparing the suit. But whether inquisitiveness stops there or goes further, the intrusion will be justified on the score that a newspaper simply has to tell its readers whatever they want to know, and that an event "in the love-life of someone with a name" is "news."

Northcliffe was fond of saying that English newspapers had much to learn from American, and they have learned this. For some years now *The Times* has published from time to time a letter written by some outraged citizen or other complaining that a woman suddenly bereaved of husband or son had been rung up on the telephone by a paper "not *The Times*." Fleet Street has come to suppose that a bereaved person might experience "sensation," and that if he or she could be induced to describe the "sensation" to the press, this would be of "public interest."

Do news editors and reporters

object to behaving in such fashion? In 1938 the King of the Belgians visited England and was the guest of the Duke of Portland. In an attempt to obtain an "interview" with the king at Welbeck Abbey, two or three reporters, after being denied the door, broke in. On being chided for their intrusion, they said that they had either to do their job or else lose it. How far they might have considered obtaining other employment I do not know. But nine years later, in 1947, a press photographer flaunted to the point of impudence his lack of scruple. He brought a libel suit against a weekly paper that had disapproved of his going into a house uninvited and there taking a photograph after he had been forbidden to do so. He told the judge that he had acted in virtue of his "right," the "right of a free press to record everything for the general benefit of the country." The judge did not agree with him. In giving judgment for the defendant, the judge said that the photographer plaintiff

held the view that the press had a privilege not enjoyed by ordinary people and had a kind of duty to portray what it called "life." The plaintiff held the view that he had some high mission as a press photographer to portray for the vulgar, the curious, and in some instances the morbidly minded, incidents in the private lives of other people. It could not be too strongly emphasized that in this country the press had no right to go on private property or intrude in people's private lives. The standard of conduct and manners demanded of the press was as high as that demanded of every citizen in a civilized community.

It must not be forgotten, however, that newspapers are intended to bring profit. Their revenues are derived from the publication of advertisements, and if some can obtain advertisements on the score of a quality circulation, the majority of newspapers have to attract advertisers by means of huge sales. Mr. Kingsley Martin, editor of *The New Statesman and*

Nation, has written a short book entitled *The Press the Public Wants*.^{*} There is no need to open it. Before me is the front page of to-day's issue of a London penny morning newspaper. Every one of its five top headings refers to violent death or its likelihood. Under the fold is a displayed heading about a hot-gospeller seven years old and another about a girl who killed two bulls in the ring at Bayonne. There is also a displayed heading on the country's unbalanced foreign trade account gaily disguised under the word "austerity." That goes a long way to explain press intrusion. Crime, violence, sex-appeal, sport, scandal, gossip, the freakish and odd—those are the ingredients of the pabulum which the English popular press presents to its readers, with a dash of international politics thrown in when this can be made bright or alarming.

How should it be otherwise? The vulgar, the curious, and in some instances the morbidly minded, of whom the judge spoke in giving judgment in the unsuccessful libel suit, are in England everyman and his wife. Mr. Martin, in the book I have mentioned, admits as much. He says:

It is idle to blame the proprietors of commercial newspapers for not sacrificing circulation and profits by offering to millions of readers news [e.g. about the discussion of the international control of aviation] which would only interest thousands.

Presently he says also, rather ingenuously:

It is clear that much of our talk about "public opinion" is misleading. . . . Often when we talk about the opinion of a vast and heterogeneous public, we should be more accurate if we called it a public sentiment based on prejudice and reinforced by selected facts.

The meaning of this is unmistakable, though Mr. Martin of course refuses to see it. If the press constitutes a problem, the problem is

^{*} Hogarth Press, 7s. 6d.

not to be considered in isolation: It must be viewed in the full context of human nature and the political and economic organization of a society. Mr. Martin remarks almost tearfully that the picture he paints makes democracy seem "a hopeless business." Politicians and the men who control newspapers know better.

In a book published in 1922 and entitled *A Revision of the Treaty*, the late Lord Keynes wrote some words which appear to be unduly forgotten by those who would discuss the state of the press:

It is [he said] the method of modern statesmen to talk as much folly as the public demand and to practise no more of it than is compatible with what they have said, trusting that such folly in action as must wait on folly in word will soon disclose itself as such, and furnish an opportunity for slipping back into wisdom—the Montessori system for the child, the Public. He who contradicts this child will soon give place to other tutors.

The politicians and the men who control newspapers know full well that democracy is in practice demagoguery. It is this which prepares readers of Mr. Martin's book to see that the two remedies which he has to offer are both futile.

The first is more and better education. Like many another doctrinaire reformer, Mr. Martin is blind to the character of actual human beings. Most of the inhabitants of Great Britain do not want more education, and anyhow they cannot take it. A large majority of English children have not the mental apparatus needed to sit successfully for school certificate. At the same time, numerous persons who have enjoyed in youth every educational advantage, are as adults the most hidebound by stupidity, sentiment, and prejudice. The education shibboleth is all hokey. Education cannot manufacture brains. Yet it is not stupidity to prefer entertaining newspapers to dull. Mr. Martin laments that

the popular press gave little space to the futile wrangles of the Assembly of the League of Nations. But what better evidence could there be that the nation is sound than its refusal to suffer boredom?

The other remedy Mr. Martin puts forward is that the press and other "media of mass communication" should "become increasingly public concerns." He repeats a suggestion already advanced anonymously in his journal. In 1945 the Czech Government made it by decree illegal for an individual person to own or to produce a daily or weekly newspaper. There are now nearly five hundred papers in Prague, and they are conducted "by political parties, trade unions, co-operative societies, and cultural bodies of many kinds." Mr. Martin believes that this has proved thoroughly satisfactory, and he offers the example for consideration, although he thinks that more ought to be known of the experiment before it is judged. Were England to copy Czecho-Slovakia in this respect, *The Adelphi*, as a quarterly, would no doubt be allowed to go on appearing, but it would mean the end of independent daily newspapers such as *The Times* and of independent weeklies such as the *New English Weekly*. Fortunately, what Mr. Martin himself would like to see is something rather different.

He says in his book that he would be content if all newspapers were "run in the spirit of *The Times*, *Manchester Guardian*, *Observer*, and the weekly reviews." They "should be run by responsible and independent groups and not by irresponsible individuals." The proposal does not sound so very helpful. For one thing, it cannot be as obvious to everybody as it is apparently to Mr. Martin that individuals are necessarily "irresponsible" and groups "responsible." For another thing, I cannot

see that there is necessarily any difference between a paper conducted under the control of one man and a paper "run by a responsible and independent group." The Labour Party is presumably such a group, and it "runs" a daily newspaper, the *Daily Herald*. But does the *Daily Herald* differ in any vital respect from, say, the *Daily Express*? I have heard it referred to as an inferior imitation of the *Express*.

Nor should all of us be entirely happy if the mass of our newspapers were conducted "in the spirit of . . . the weekly reviews." It is notoriously in the domain of international affairs that the popular newspaper of to-day is liable to raise scares. C. P. Scott dealt with this in an article which he contributed to the *Political Quarterly* in 1931.

How often [he asked] do not newspapers in their assumed vocation of watch-dogs for the nation, ready to bark at every footstep as though it must needs be that of an enemy, serve rather to scent danger where none is and to howl denunciation where, if they but knew, there is not the slightest need for alarm? Not that the error need be intentional. Nothing is easier than to persuade oneself that danger is in the air. Both sides may be equally to blame, and sheer ignorance is usually the vice of each. The mischief is easily done. There may be no actual perversion of facts; a judicious selection may equally suffice, and this apart from any real malice.

Mr. Martin digs back to the last century to find the *Daily Mail* threatening the French with war at the time of Fashoda, and he quotes an indictment of the same paper by A. G. Gardiner of the part it had played shortly before 1914 in inflaming popular sentiment against Germany. But this is simply, in Mr. Martin's case, the kettle calling the pot black. Whereas a popular newspaper may be suspected of distorting foreign news merely in pursuit of sales, *The New Statesman and Nation* is

hardly to be acquitted of some political or other motive when, not content with "judicious selection," it has preferred an "actual perversion of the facts."

In 1946 *The New Statesman and Nation* reviewed a book entitled *Report on the Russians* by the American, Mr. W. L. White. In the course of the review it was stated that Mr. White had been content to reproduce only "the German version" of "the Katyn massacres." Again, towards the end of the same year, a contributor referred in *The New Statesman and Nation* to a booklet published by the British People's Party and to the statement in the booklet that "ten thousand Polish officers" were shot at Katyn, near Smolensk, by the Russians, and he went on to describe this statement as "Goebbels's story" of "the Katyn massacres." Yet the truth regarding Katyn is perfectly well known to quite a number of people in England. No doubt the Russian fabrication issued in English in January 1944 under the title *Truth about Katyn* had only been refuted in a document privately circulated, but that is no reason for pretending that it has not been refuted.

After that, nobody need be surprised that *The New Statesman and Nation* should treat the question of "freedom of the press" frivolously, as it did in printing a story about the reporter who presented himself at the door of a hall in which a meeting was being held. The reporter, the story goes, wished to be admitted. He was told that no invitation had been issued to the press. He asked the object of the meeting, and was told that it was to discuss the freedom of the press. The view of the freedom of the press implied in the story is no better than that of the press photographer who lost his libel suit. But at least it is evident that if the handful of men who control the

mass of English newspapers, were driven out of Fleet Street, and "improper directives to editors" were abolished, and the consciences of reporters and correspondents were never improperly "interfered" with, the English public would still not be able to count on getting the truth from the press.

A veiling of the facts is one of the prices of so-called democracy. To quote a second time the late Lord Keynes, in *A Revision of the Treaty*:

There are, in the present times, two opinions; not, as in former ages, the true and the false, but the outside and the inside; the opinion of the public voiced by the politicians and the newspapers, and the opinion of the politicians, the journalists and the civil servants, upstairs and backstairs and behind-stairs, expressed in limited circles. In time of war it became a patriotic duty that the two opinions should be as different as possible; and some seem to think it so still.

Some seem to think it so still to-day after a second world war!

In the meanwhile, our press lords are in danger of being turned into scapegoats and attention diverted from another form of control now seemingly in the ascendant. I mean, control by trade union. The suspension of the weekly papers during the so-called fuel crisis of February 1947 I shall turn to in a moment. I want first to point out that it coincided with a suspension of all daily newspapers in Paris. For more than three weeks the Parisians were without a daily paper. The suspension there was not due to any action by the government, such as had brought our own weeklies into abeyance for a fortnight. It was due to a trade union dispute. But the dispute was every whit as effective as if it had been a government decree. If a suspension of the press is against the interests of the community—a point I only assume for the sake of argument—that such a suspension is brought about by a trade union instead of by a

government cannot make it any the less injurious. Yet, although the newspaper strike in Paris was reported in our own journals, no editorial writer, not even any "letter to the editor," seems to have drawn a parallel between the two suspensions.

This is the more curious that trade union interference with the press is not unknown here. The general strike of 1926 was precipitated, I may recall, by the refusal of the chapel of the composing room of a popular London morning newspaper to allow a certain editorial to be put into type. During the so-called fuel crisis of 1947 a further interference occurred, and if only a small periodical was involved that does not make the incident any the less significant. The periodical was the *Official Architect*, and its editor, Mr. H. Bryant Newbold, made known the facts in a letter which *The Times* published on 5 March.

On 8 February, the issue of the *Official Architect* due for publication on the 15th, was, Mr. Newbold says, half-run off, and only two days' work was required to finish. Although the suspension of periodicals was not to begin till the 17th, the workmen at the printer's declined on the 16th to do anything to the issue till their union had been consulted, and the union decided that no further work on the production of the *Official Architect* should take place till 3 March. In the meanwhile the Board of Trade was referred to, and it saw no objection to completing work for publication. But when this was brought to the notice of the union, that body still refused to allow the work to proceed. If the trade union's behaviour was not censorship of a new kind I do not know presumption when I see it. It is hardly needful to point out that this censorship, once countenanced, might be carried very far.

As for the suspension during a fortnight of all weekly papers published in the country, on the pretext of shortage of fuel, that was accomplished, I may recall, by means of an arrangement reached by the Minister of Fuel and Power with the Periodical Publishers' Association. Mr. Martin was only able to advert in the preface of his book to the curious procedure whereby the suspension was brought about. He does not think, he says, that the government wished to suppress, or had any desire to suppress, free comment for a fortnight. But he adds:

The lesson here is that if in the future some government did wish to suppress free comment, it might only too easily accomplish its purpose without much public outcry, by a technique of bluffing and cajoling a trade association which considered the commercial rather than the political value of the press.

In speaking of the "commercial value of the press" he must have in mind his proposal to have "the media of mass communication" made "public concerns." But surely what matters is that a government that does lip service to the independence of the press is nevertheless finding means other than a direct censorship of restraining both newspapers and organs of comment. There is also paper control of which neither Mr. Martin in his book nor the National Union of Journalists in its memorandum breathes a word. Unmistakably paper control is a weapon for the exercise of a covert censorship. Yet, as was shown in France during the German occupation, it is the open and direct censorship which is among all forms of censorship that most easily circumvented.

Finally, a word may be said regarding what amounts to the mystery of the press. It is the mystery of the *mot d'ordre*. Of this I give but one instance, but it will be enough. Unquestionably a number of people—among them, so

I am told, several judges—have felt uneasy about the Nuremberg Trial and the "punishment of war criminals" in general. Yet only in a newspaper here and there, and usually an obscure newspaper at that, has this uneasiness been reflected. An English professor of international law who had just retired from his chair wrote in the autumn of 1946—at the time of the judgment and verdict at Nuremberg—a letter expressing his doubts about the trial. The letter was refused publication in a leading daily and in two weekly reviews. Major-General J. F. C. Fuller has condemned the "punishment of war criminals" in his book, *Armament and History*, which was published in 1946. The book was widely reviewed, but most reviews avoided any mention of his attitude to this particular matter. Then I may perhaps be allowed to speak of a little book of my own, *Epitaph on Nuremberg*, which obtained very favourable notices in *The Adelphi* and in other periodicals highly respected. The book aims at setting forth the objections to the Nuremberg Trial in particular and to "the punishment of war criminals" in general. By the majority of the press it has been received in silence, and in three periodical publications, two of them religious, its argument has been treated with manifest disingenuousness. How does this happen? Who is responsible? Nobody can believe that it has anything to do with chain ownership of the press or with alleged need of popular newspapers to conciliate their advertisers. It might offer an interesting subject for inquiry.

The royal commission has at its head our leading Aristotelian now living. But even Aristotle himself might have quailed at the task of solving the problems which lie between the lines of the commission's terms of reference.

Christianity or God?

A. R. VIDLER

Frederick Denison Maurice, addressing a meeting of the Young Men's Christian Association in 1850, pointed out that its members could have no doubt that the names *Christian* and *Society* were naturally and properly connected; and then, perhaps crediting his auditory with more discernment than it possessed, he added:

I am convinced that you are not content that the word Christian should have a loose, vague signification. You believe that it has a real, distinct, awful signification. You would not, I suspect, be inclined to talk of Christianity doing this or that thing, effecting this or that change in the condition of the world. You would be afraid of such an abstraction as that, which might stand for a multitude of different notions, false and true. You would say that you must have it changed for something that is personal and vital; and you would have no doubt where you ought to go that you may get it so changed. You would think that the grounds of all teaching upon this subject must be in the Bible.

We are all now subject to an inveterate habit of talking about "Christianity" or "religion," and it is with some surprise that we discover that they are not Bible words. Doubtless these terms have their necessary uses; but the fact that they are nowadays so much preferred may be a measure of the extent to which we have substituted humanly originated or contrived notions or schemes for faith in a God who is the maker of all things visible and invisible, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion and His kingdom from generation to generation, who ruleth in the kingdoms of men. The Christian at all events is called upon to profess his belief not in Christianity or religion, but in God, with whom a thousand years are but as one day and who can deliver us from

reliance upon our Christianity, our religion and our culture. Of course the word "God" is used in a hundred different senses, and no-senses, but it is a word that points to the fundamental reality about which the Bible speaks and that purports to be filled with meaning in the Bible itself over against the pretensions of any number of gods or idolatrous imaginations.

The Bible is not directly addressed to people who are inquiring whether God exists, and the Apostle Paul did not get much of a hearing at Athens where that question was regarded as an interesting topic for discussion. You will not find in the Bible arguments for the existence of God, but you will find the gradual manifestation of His name through His acts in creating the world and in civilizing mankind and delivering it from the powers that are ever threatening to drag it down into chaos or corruption. These acts of God in history are interpreted by the prophets and apostles whom He raises up to speak His Word, and above all in Jesus Christ who is the Word Incarnate or enfleshed.

Now this may all seem incredible or meaningless to men of our generation, and it is indeed difficult to exaggerate the extent to which it has gone dead even on those of us who pay lip-service to the Bible. But this is worth talking about, whereas apart from it the prospective survival or departure of Christianity, or the Church, or European culture, seems to be of very little consequence. If however the God, to whom the Bible bears witness, IS, before ever we try to construct or to apologize for Him, if there is a God over the world who is in a permanent and living rela-

tion to mankind, then we have to begin all over again to turn to Him and learn of Him. For does it not make all the difference in the world whether or no there is an Eternal King of kings, a Punisher of tyrants, a Deliverer of slaves, a present Guide and Protector, an Originator of righteousness, an invisible Head and Unifier of our race?

To turn to Him and to hear His Word, to let Him judge our self-confidence, our pettiness, and our sectarianism, to be raised out of our fears and frustrations, to come together on the ground of our relation to Him and of our dependence on Him, this will certainly require an immense process of repentance and of dying to live, on the part of professing Christians as of everyone else. In fact, on their part most of all, for they are most tempted to suppose, because of their blasted Christianity, that they are already there, that they have got the goods. I say "they," but I mean "we." Anyhow I speak for myself. I realize that I am likely to be much further from the Kingdom of God and more blind to the demand for an as yet undreamed-of repentance than those who less easily prattle about it.

But this to me is already clear, that the God who is there behind all our clouds and darkness, able to enlighten and renew us as we look and listen and obey, is a God who is utterly concerned with our common life in history, with its wholeness and order and liberty, with civilization and culture, and—to be more concrete and particular—with this nation of ours. The testimony of the Bible on this score seems luminous; that is, of the Bible, if you take it as a whole; if of course you cull only a few portions of it, and interpret them according to your fancy, you can make it mean anything or nothing. The retreat or debasement of our

modern Christianity into other worldly piety, or ecclesiasticism, or religious clubs, is nowhere more roundly condemned and exposed than in the Bible. It is the obedience of nations, not of secluded sects, that the Lord of heaven and earth demands. It is nations that are called to glorify His Name by serving Him in righteousness at whatever stage of development they may be.

And here I join hands with Mr. Murry, though we reach this point by different routes or after different prolegomena. I agree wholeheartedly that England, in order to remain a human society, must acknowledge its calling to become "a free society" and that this entails a call to moral regeneration on a national scale such as we have as yet hardly begun to contemplate. Those who see this must not only lift up their voices to say so, but must set to work to discover what it implies in each area of our national life. For it is a call that is addressed, and can come home, to every citizen whatever his station. The imperative may be owned and answered by many who would at present hesitate, and perhaps refuse, to describe it as a *divine* imperative. God speaks in the consciences of men before they confess His Name. We should expect too in view of our intellectual confusions and cultural divisions and spiritual impoverishment that the call to national renewal will be heard in many different and queer accents and formulated in a great variety of terms. But it does not seem to me too difficult to distinguish the forces that are making for renewal from those that are making for disintegration and collapse. Those who believe in the God of the Bible can set no limit to the range of His operations and certainly will not look for comrades only among men wearing a single ecclesiastical or political label. On

the contrary, they should be agents of reconciliation and co-operation among all who are looking for and working towards the light, since they know that all who turn in that direction are being drawn by the one Light of the world. We must all begin from "some basis of social health and social simplicity," and there is such a basis which can uphold governments and the administrators of large-scale institutions as well as lonely prophets and small communities. In this regard the Bible says emphatically "both . . . and," not "either . . . or." God does bring down the mighty from their seat, but He is always ordaining ministers to serve His people at the centres as well as at the circumferences of power.

§

If I wanted to pick a theological quarrel with Mr. Murry, it would be over his tendency to absolutize the calling which arises out of the relation of God to the English people at this stage in their history. It is right to say that the free society into which we are called to move forward is without any exact historical precedent and will make more exacting demands upon the responsibility of all its citizens than any previous type of society. But I can see no warrant for describing it as the first and only Christian political society that has ever been achieved. I can say with him that this is a calling that comes upon England now with the force of an absolute obligation, because it is our absolute duty to do our relative best; but I do not think this gives us any title to condemn as un-Christian other types of political society either that have existed in the past or that may be appropriate to the stage of historical development reached by other societies today.

Still, exaggeration that is designed to awaken us to the tre-

mendous response that is demanded of us at this moment in our destiny may do no harm. There is plenty of precedent in the Bible for regarding a crisis that is here and now as final and absolute. Historical relativity may have gone too much to our heads today and be inhibiting us from taking our own task in history with absolute seriousness.

More alarming at first sight to the theologian is Mr. Murry's statement that he holds that "God and Man are reciprocally dependent." This implies a denial of the distinction between the Creator and the creature. That is not the God to whom the Bible bears witness from beginning to end; that is not the God in whom I believe or whom I worship. But then I doubt if Mr. Murry means that God is dependent on man in the sense that man is dependent on God. I take it that what he means to assert is that God has taken mankind into a permanent and indissoluble relation to Himself. He will never leave us nor forsake us, however far we carry our rebellion against His constitution for our race.

I believe that there is such a constitution grounded in the nature of things, grounded that is in the nature of God and His relation to mankind, and that it will be vindicated against all ruthless tyrants and all faithless priests and every lie that sets itself up in the place of God. This constitution does not depend on men's faith in it; it remains true and stands, whether they believe in it or not, whether they abide in it or not. European culture may go, Christianity may go; they will go in so far as they are not founded on this constitution, but the way is still open for them, that is for us, to return to the living Author of man's well-being and to learn from Him through His subordinate teachers, of whom there is not a dearth although they are not grouped in

any one school or identified with any one discipline, how to fashion and re-order our national life. That our plight is grave no sensitive mind can doubt; there is decomposition and disaster in the air. Yet much of our heritage remains and is not beyond restoration, and here and there, if not everywhere, there are signs of new life striving to press through. You may well ask: "Who will speak to them with the voice of authority—the authority that will reverberate their own suppressed but passionate desire for

the good, and not right and not the wrong? We have not to wait for it to be raised up in our midst, not far to go in or out of the living voice of the living places within our hearts and the inexhaustible prophecy, and when every attentive, lively perception is done, of obedience to one who is entitled to our adoration of our race hidden in the darknesses.

Chum, You Won't Feel Nothing —I'll Say You Don't!

ROBERT SEEDS

He had knotted his jaw. He'd put up his hand and had felt the knot in his cheek. Now he couldn't go touching it, couldn't bring up neither hand from behind his back.

Didn't matter, neither. They hadn't put the knot in his cheek. They'd slipped it round so that it was lying on his neck, just under his jaw. To one side it was, lying there, quiet, where his face and his neck connected—'d connected.

Wasn't much odds. He couldn't have felt it now. Anyway. His fingers 'd have come up against the black stuff—coarse stuff, probably, a real coarse cloth—fingers 'd feel nothing through it. Anyway. That was their business.

Not his, it wasn't. They'd know all about it. 'S all their business. Not much odds.

Couldn't see nothing. But he knew. He'd been to the pictures.

Not that he cared. Nobody could stop him having seen some life.

What was one man, more or less?

There were people. The hard, bright ones, them up in a crowd. Houses showed the faces from which people came to which this side could go.

Everywhere there was in the hard, light the screen, moving, seated watching in warmth of the hall, break into various a great deal in the light; or life could itself into one great darkness, swelling into two until it exploded and pressingly hot hall.

Either way the error same. A man couldn't see pretty well what he needed not pay much way.

He was pushed in, he pushed back at it against the wall, them all go by; or it

by and watch him up against the wall.

It was all so easy to do, so easy to see, under the hard, bright lights. And, once he had seen it, a man would remember and find his way, pretty near, in the dark. That is, if he was anything of a man.

Life was there in the streets. All the crowd showed up. A man became part of it.

"Hiya," they said, noisily, all right, "hiya chum, you going places with us?" They knew how to talk. They travelled. A man knew it. He went along with them. "Pals, I'm with you," said the man. He was all right.

Or "lo, dearie," they said, in voices of soft brass, "looking for anyone? Like to come back home?" They all spoke the same. If he wanted to, he went. "Sure, I'll look after you," was what a man might say. He had always been all right.

There had always been a patter in the streets. Words or feet, shoes or talk—it went patter in the streets. Boy and man knew what to say. There was always something:

"What about it, Georgie? Let's!"

"Never meant to do it—honest."

"Dó us some good won't it? Getting soft?"

"Sorry I let you down, Sir."

"Come on, Elsie—you're a sport!"

"Not me! Must have been her other fellow."

"Just till Friday."

"Pay you Monday—'s truth!"

"Easy—cor, 's easy 's easy!"

"Well, said we'd have to chance it, didn't I?"

"How about it?"

"All the same to me."

"We're on?"

"B'luck nex' time!"

"O.K.?"

"O.K."

"O.K.?"

"O.K."

"O.K.?"

"O.K.!"

It all ran so easily in the streets. There was nothing that a man had to worry about. He knew what he saw and what it amounted to.

A man knew how to put it, to sum it all up. It was either:

"Well, you bought it! I'm all right!"

Or it was:

"I've had it! Well, I can take it!"

Sometimes it was the one. Sometimes it was the other. Sometimes things came your way. Sometimes things went their way. They were many.

They were many. What to them were two men, more or less?

§

The knot was his. He had it for keeps. Joke? Yes, that's the stuff to give the troops. Joke! Grimly to the end!

And it was his. They couldn't touch it. Why, that knot lying on his neck—that knot of theirs—it wasn't a knot at all. He knew that, now that he'd remembered.

Knew all about it. They didn't use knots—it'd be a metal ring, really, so the new hemp rope'd slip easy. Always a new rope, it was. And they didn't slip it through a knot but a metal ring it was. He knew. All right. He was all right.

Couldn't see. But he knew. They'd not touched him. Couldn't hurt him. Couldn't cover what he'd seen—with their hood.

Course he hadn't seen himself standing here. But he couldn't— even now—not with their hood. But he'd seen a lot of things. He knew. All right.

All right! P'r'aps this wasn't exactly what he had imagined—but it couldn't be so different from what he'd pictured, neither.

Conversation in Egypt

D. J. ENRIGHT

You are to suppose that Mr. X, a fairly intelligent Englishman-in-Egypt, and Y Effendi, a fairly intelligent Egyptian, neither of them with any very obtrusive axe to grind, have met in some spot congenial to the reasonably decent interchange of opinions—in some ideal location about midway between the Union Club and the Moslem Brotherhood. In a second-class carriage of one of Egypt's excellent tram services, perhaps, or in one of the public gardens—places, alas, where statesmen are rarely to be found.

Y Effendi: . . . and now that we are at last free from foreign domination our country will develop in a truly democratic manner.

Mr. X: Democracy in Egypt! . . . I should rather expect to find that the Pyramid of Kheops had changed into the Statue of Liberty overnight! The population of Egypt seems to consist exclusively of a fair number of Pashas in Buicks, an unfair number of civil servants in tarbushes and a fantastic number of beggars in rags. No, I cannot connect democracy with a country where the farm-labourer's wage has only just been raised to rs. 5d. per day.

Y Effendi: And I cannot connect democracy with a country that has continually broken its promises to withdraw from Egypt and finally has to be more or less thrown out.

Mr. X: But Britain's behaviour towards Egypt has always been dictated by the great fact of the Canal. The Canal is an artery of civilization, you know. . . . But how you have the cheek to ask for the Soudan!

Y Effendi: But Egypt's behaviour towards the Soudan has always been dictated by the great fact of

the River. The River is an artery of civilization, you know. Egypt-Soudan is a *natural* unity, the unity of the Nile. I think we can make out a far more convincing case on this point than you ever invented for the unity of Britain and Ireland, two islands naturally disunited by a sea.

Mr. X: Don't let's use that word *natural*—it has the unpleasant habit of suddenly losing whatever meaning one supposed it to have. And don't let's dig up the past, or I shall find myself referring to your treatment of the Israelites. Moreover we had better agree not to mention the "arteries of civilization"—there appear to be too many of them, and all hardened. I can see that a Britain under Labour government has really no choice in the matter of withdrawing from Egypt; it *must* withdraw, whatever the price. Winning the war at the cost of electing a Labour government and at the expense of such rash statements as the Atlantic Charter has left Britain rather in the position of a defeated enemy facing heavy reparations. But the socialists were elected in a last desperate attempt to exchange politics for morals, so we cannot expect a second Elizabethan Age. But the Soudan is a different question altogether. Why, you cannot govern *yourselves* properly—it took me three weeks of agitated interviews with about a dozen different officials—all very busy with newspapers and cups of coffee—before I could get hold of my ration cards. And after working myself into a nervous breakdown I discovered that ration cards are quite superfluous since every grocer's shop runs a department of the Black Market where rationed

goods can be bought freely at a slight increase in price . . . and if I ever complain about anything there are always four or five civil servants whose only job seems to be to murmur a soothing *Malesh* in my ear . . . but I *do mind!* . . . *Malesh* is the national philosophy of Egypt—and that is what I call being a *backward country*.

Y Effendi: No doubt the coffee-drinking officials offered *you* a cup, too; and that's more than you would get in Whitehall. But you are right: we *are* backward. If the invention of the atomic bomb had been left to us I don't suppose it would ever have been invented; if someone had stumbled on it, I dare say the plans would have been mislaid in some government office, and we should all have said *Malesh* and gone back to our coffee and newspapers. We are, I confess, not very efficient: it would take us far more than six years of war to smash up our continent.

Mr. X: I pity the poor Soudanese if you have your way with them; look at the frightful discipline in the schools where your future "colonial" administrators are so successfully avoiding education. Quite recently some of the young savages beat up their headmaster and caused the unfortunate man to sprain his ankle in jumping out of the classroom window.

Y Effendi: I believe that school-boys in England are quite handy with their fathers' army revolvers.

Mr. X: And look at the standard of education in the Egyptian Universities. I am told that English lecturers actually have to explain what kind of an animal a *poem* is! We may not read poetry in England, but we do know what it is. And before the lecturer is halfway through his explanation the chance is that his students will have gone on strike in commemoration of some insignificant person killed during anti-British demonstrations

ten or twenty years ago—killed, in all probability, by falling off a tram while intent on picking pockets—how do you think English teachers are going to feel about such inconceivable rudeness?

Y Effendi: I have noticed that English teachers in Egypt never (feel very grand anyway: rudeness is the least of the evils they have to contend with. They find, apparently, that since no financial aid is forthcoming from their government they are obliged either to live apart from their wives or else send them out to work—and both alternatives are rather shocking to us uncivilized Egyptians! Now the French teachers in Egypt receive a handsome subsidy from *their* government which enables them to live, in your quaint phrase, "as Englishmen." Doesn't the British government approve of its teachers going abroad?

Mr. X: On this point I am as much in the dark as you. Britain has come to realise—or shall I say, has been forced by circumstances to hope—that the lecturer's voice is mightier than the sword. During a recent visit to Egypt the Chairman of the British Council stressed the overwhelming importance of "cultural relations" and complained of the difficulty experienced in recruiting staff for such work. A number of English teachers in the audience, who would be only too glad (for the most cogent of reasons) to take on extra work under the Council, were definitely not amused. Indeed, the swiftness with which statements emphasizing the value of cultural propaganda are succeeded by reports that the Council is cutting its staff here and drawing in its horns there is giving rise to the rumour that Mr. Basil Dean is in charge of administration. But you will agree that the Council in Egypt fulfils an important function?

Y Effendi: Yes, it preaches most

persuasively—to the converted. Mr. Raymond Mortimer came out here on a tour recently; his lectures were very well attended—why, I think I even saw a couple of tarbushes among the Parisian hats. Naturally, he never got near to the root of the matter. It is your secondary-school and University teachers who are doing whatever good can possibly be done at present. A pity that the money expended on Mr. Mortimer's trip could not have been divided up among them. It's the resident English teacher—not the English Tommy nor even the famous English editor—who is his country's best ambassador, you know.

Mr. X: If you are suggesting that the Council is not tackling its more difficult problems—those of sowing the seed in the *rockier ground*—let me remind you of such unpleasant incidents as the time-bomb that exploded in the British Institute at Alexandria several weeks ago. It is hardly encouraging to think that perhaps one of the students smuggled that bomb in under cover of textbooks bought for him by the British taxpayer, is it?

Y Effendi: The Institute bomb was sincerely deplored by all except a negligible minority of Egyptians. Without in the least defending that disgraceful affair, let me remind you that your country is no longer in the position of a benevolent conqueror patronising us with its culture. We are quite content to make our laws and issue our edicts in Arabic, and it is now up to you to *prove* to us that the English language is worth the trouble of learning it. I will admit at once, however, that the Egyptian newspaper which accused the British schools and Institutes throughout Egypt of being centres of British Imperialism was exaggerating dreadfully. But exaggeration is perhaps one of our national characteristics. . . .

Mr. X: Your rich men are certainly exaggeratedly rich and your poor people exaggeratedly poor. And your students exaggeratedly undisciplined. Though I am, I trust, a reasonably progressive educationalist, I should feel much happier if your headmasters were more energetic with their birches. And though in politics I am merely an old-fashioned Liberal, I should feel much happier if you had a really strong and serious socialist party. I hope you are wholly conscious of the problem facing you—you can only justify your loud demands for complete independence by robbing the few Pashas to pay the many poor.

Y Effendi: True. Now that the foreign soldier has gone and the foreign business man, if he stays at all, will stay on our terms, it is up to us to examine the credentials of our native capitalists and land-owners. Unfortunately the rich and powerful Egyptian is a figure of beloved awe to the population at large—we have spent so much time de-bunking Britain that we haven't managed to get round to him. And you must remember that we are still at least a *semi*-Oriental civilization: glamorous wealth and holy poverty are traditional to Egypt. . . .

Mr. X: Taking care of less capable countries used to be traditional to Britain. . . . Egypt is too far committed to Western ideals, ethical and political, to draw back now—yet how far she is from realising those ideals—or even sincerely sympathising with them! By associating herself with the countries demanding liberty and independence Egypt has let herself in for equality as well. Your affinity at present seems to be with Czarist Russia, and I fear that sooner or later, when beggars and fellahin have finally repudiated that magic word *Malesh*, the same exaggerated violence will overtake Egypt.

Y Effendi: I think that you are exaggerating now! If bloody revolution should break out in Egypt you can be sure that it would

expire with the arrival of the hot weather. But it is undoubtedly true that Egypt's struggle is only just beginning.

From Euripides to Essen

DORIS N. DALGLISH

"Next term," said the Latin mistress, "three of you will certainly begin Greek." One of the names which she added was mine.

That was all. The lesson continued, but as we studied the use of temporal conjunctions with the subjunctive, there was a new lustre on the proceedings. *Sed haec hactenus*. (No, I may have been ashamed sometimes, in domestic surroundings, when young, of being "queer" and knowing Greek, but in nineteen forty-seven it is time that anyone knowing a little Latin should cease to hide it.)

O world so safe, in which we bought the books necessary for this! I knew a girl who carried a Greek grammar to the Boat Race so that no moment need be wasted. All the intimate details of our wardrobes were given, once for all, in *Testament of Youth*, but who can convey the exact difference between our mental wardrobe and that of today's Sixth Form. There was an adequate form library in the room in which that Latin lesson was given. The absence of girls' school stories was very significant, and marks the epoch. Girls' education had obviously moved away from the values of the L. T. Meade world, but it was not yet so independent and self-confident that it could produce its own literature. And so we remained thrilled in the shadow of Dr. Arnold's presence, doing our best to approximate to masculine standards (in days when "Hang!" was a shocking oath),

expending our emotions on *The Hill* and *Fathers of Men* and *The Bending of a Twig*. It was quite a good thing to have stopped addressing your school as "Young ladies," but it was a pity to take to saying "Girls" in a tone which almost turned it into the equivalent of "Boys."

There must, however, still be a remnant in girls' schools who learn Greek, and to them it is best to return without more digression into that secure-seeming world in which the captains and the kings of Europe went in processions and sat on thrones, enjoying a stability which seemed invulnerable. One question haunting me as I recalled that Latin lesson was whether it means to them what it means to us. Would the new schoolgirls give to the announcement that three of them were to begin Spanish or Russian the same reception as we gave to the news about Greek? Has the old classical background to which, at these words, we half-consciously drew nearer ("I made no vows, but vows were then made for me") been irremediably assaulted, disturbed and shaken? Is it merely some scrap of wreckage preserved by piety which offers a very limited shade and protection to those who choose, today, to study classics? It would seem that they choose to learn a language which is tolerated, not battled for. It was very different in those last post-1914 years, when "Compulsory Greek!" was still the battle-cry of the universities. For some the

dilemma was painful. Was it not said that Lowes Dickinson voted against it because he saw only the "compulsory"?

The girl with the pigtail and black stockings who was to begin Greek was just beginning to find adventure in public libraries, and there, in addition to reading Masefield in the *English Review*, she found *Punch* offering her stirring and witty propaganda in verse by "Evøe." He enlisted her at once on the side of tradition, persuading her to accept gladly her infinitesimal share of the responsibility of an ancient curriculum. A barren way was the syntax, and sharp for delicate feet. . . . And verbs, irregular, massive, hung o'er us with threatening brow. (I don't know the Perfect Passive of most of them even now.)

But it led to the flowery places, to the
Isles where the heroes dwell

To the silvery laugh of the Graces, and
the meadows of asphodel.

Later, the same poet wrote a peculiarly delightful lyric on the coincidence which enabled the theatre sign "Apollo—The Glad Eye" to be seen, expressing his joy that our country

had hailed with tribute so impassioned
The god of things that shine;
The god whose pæan strikes the rafter,
Who wears the laurel crown,
Who brightens heaven and earth with
laughter,
When his glad eye looks down.

You cannot produce such pleasures from an education which turns its back upon Greek. Can politics, philosophy and economics offer any satisfactory substitute, or have these no playtime?

It is true that the Third Programme is doing big things with Greek plays, but it is harder for their influence to reach the adult heart. Hearing Greek, reading about the Greeks, in adolescence is the safest way to impress the ancient values. It was to our good to learn, in an impressionable season, that there had been a

Thucydides who wrote what historical technicians call the Melian Dialogue, conveying for ever the argument between grabbing imperialism and small-scale self-government. At an age when spiritual experience must still be immature, to read, for example, what Gilbert Murray wrote about Aidos and Nemesis in *The Rise of the Greek Epic* acts as an injection of morality which is bound to enlarge and colour the maturer sensitiveness. The recognition of those decencies and chivalries which Aidos decreed towards the old, the helpless, the stranger, and the awed admission that to fail in such recognition brings its sure Nemesis, provides the thread in the strand of the grown man and woman's belief for lack of which the current blend of humanism and a Christianity almost denuded of dignity fails to hold things together. It is better, when you are young, to learn your iconoclasm from Euripides than from Voltaire or Shaw. Not only is beauty thrown in, but the sense of something august that must be acknowledged, emerges. One remembers Gilbert Murray's unexpected touch in his portrait of Euripides: the average Athenian said, "A pity the man should be such a prig." Where Greek is concerned, we are dying for lack of another Renaissance and its priggishness. We do not ask for, or need, another *Trojan Women*, but we could do with the tragic vision of the next chapter in the sequel to war. Even the pagan "prig" would have repudiated the state of occupied Germany with force enough to sicken our hearts and silence grumbles at the thought of it. Soon it will be too late. A little Greek, a little understanding that Nemesis has a way of commending the poisoned chalice and the under-caloried plate to our own lips, might have helped the Control Commission surprisingly.

The Condition of Holland : 1947

J. T. BROCKWAY

I arrived in Holland in the early summer of 1946. In England I had read of life under the German occupation in this small and smiling land where, before the war, I had been a frequent visitor, and I was anxious to see for myself what war and occupation had done to her.

At first sight, the damage did not strike one as very remarkable. The fields, still bright with the green of spring, were under cultivation; builders were everywhere busily at work on restoration; in the first restaurant I visited I had a splendid meal, with wine—and at a price; in the house where I stayed, we ate well, though simply, with but one hot meal a day.

After two months, however, I realised that everything was not well beneath the surface of recovery. Despite the signs of rebuilding, repainting, reploughing, despite the unconquerable exuberance of tree, bush, and flower, it was impossible to remain blind to the material, social, and spiritual havoc war and a long occupation had left behind them. A year after liberation, the two main topics of conversation were food and the Germans, with Indonesia a poor third. And it was not surprising, for this people had suffered what we in England had been spared and cannot imagine. We have no idea of what it means to have been occupied by Nazi Germany. Not even a proper idea of the simpler, more obvious miseries: cold, hunger, sudden arrest, shootings, deportation; and certainly none of the hundred and one small refinements of oppression and of the deep psychical wounds inflicted daily on the human spirit: wounds that will take a generation to heal.

S.S. troops have not marched

through our streets, offending the English air with the stamp of their feet and the sadistic bark of their hymns of hatred. We have not seen our own countrymen aping them and licking their boots; not seen our own children dressed up in Nazi uniforms and taught arrogance, cruelty, and treachery; not been arrested for failing to applaud such sights. We were not condemned to walk furtively in our own towns and villages, obliged daily to witness the conqueror's display of insuperable power, and ever liable to sudden insult, injury, or arrest from an unpredictable outburst of Aryan hatred or lust. We were not ordered off our own streets, morning and evening, under penalty of death should we be found there without the oppressor's ticket of permission. We were not supplied with an identity card which contained both a photograph and a copy of our fingerprints—a criminal's passport, in fact—for which, as a refinement of oppression, we were obliged to pay from our own pockets. Our fathers and sons were not deported to forced labour camps or obliged to go into hiding for years to escape such a fate. Our wives have not heard the peremptory rap of the Gestapo's rifle-butt on the door and been forced to witness the harrowing search of their home, knowing that husband and sons lay all the time concealed in cupboard, loft, or under the baby's cot. We were not turned out of our homes at half an hour's notice to accommodate the poor drunken wretches whose job it was to launch the Vzs. We have not starved in the arena whilst well-fed Germans (fed from our own farms) looked on with amusement and threatened that we should be

Every day one can hear complaints that "We have become balkanised" and that the only way of getting anything done is by "Corruptie en Connectie" (Corruption and Influence). One's day to day dealings provide only too lavish evidence that this latter complaint is not based merely on post-war disillusion, but on fact.

Only a little travel about the country will reveal the extent of mere material damage. It should not be forgotten that this country, between the years 1940 and 1945, was twice a battlefield and in the interval a cold and hungry prison under constant aerial attack. But far more serious than any material destruction is the German disruption of the social body and its corruption of the social conscience, on which that body depends. Long endured cruelty, robbery, hunger, imprisonment, and murder do not have the purifying influence some moralists would have us believe. On the contrary, they breed hatred, disillusion, cynicism and a breakdown of the unwritten laws of human conduct. Holland now possesses, besides a nation-wide Black Market, prison camps of her own where the N.S.B.ers (the Dutch Nazis) are detained, and seems to be plagued by a new mushroom army of officials, the petty ranks of which show evidence of having learnt something from the methods of their late masters, the Germans, in the way of "insolence of office." Less odious, though no less significant, is the falling-off in the sense of social obligation and responsibility, the propensity for "wangling," and the decline of manners involving a seemingly deliberate lack of politeness towards others in street, shop, and tram, and particularly noticeable in the behaviour of children and youths, who for years have been denied regular schooling. I was once, for instance, accompanying a lady of

84 years of age to the tram when she was knocked down into the street by the crowd fighting to enter the tram as it approached. The incident was not exceptional, but typical and illustrative of the attitude towards shortages, even shortages of tram space. As for the breakdown in the sense of social responsibility, the current enterprise of a certain daily paper may give an idea of this: it is, at the moment, conducting an enquiry; its questions take the following form: 1. Do you agree that there is a lack of social responsibility and community feeling in the country? 2. If you were in an official position, could you say, with your hand on your heart, that you would not use your appointment for private advantages? 3. Do you know a single person holding such a position, who has used it exclusively for the general good?

This state of affairs can be found in an even more acute form in other European countries which have suffered German occupation, and it should be remembered that Holland is regarded as having made a more speedy recovery than most. Her ability to recover completely depends largely on the outcome of the struggle to raise the standard of living, and this struggle is menaced not only by the destruction and dislocation already mentioned, but also by the war's later economic repercussions in the form of the turmoil in the Indies, the loss of German trade and of the carrying trade of Germany's and other central European countries' goods down the Dutch rivers to the western coast of Europe and beyond. These difficulties have been faced magnificently so far.

I see Holland in the image of one of her own splendid canals: straight, bright, and shining in the sunlight, crossed by the white painted arcs of its bridges, and

flanked by graceful trees and mel-
 lowed seventeenth-century houses;
 and I see the war as a dirty, smoke-
 belching barge, which has charged
 headlong through the once quiet
 waters, leaving behind turmoil:
 the bridges are down; the houses
 scarred; the trees felled; the waters
 no longer placid, but muddied and
 littered with filth and refuse. Filth
 and refuse which, unhappily
 enough, were not only thrown
 overboard from the destroying
 barge, but churned up from the
 bed of the smiling canal itself.
 The filth and refuse that lies at the
 bottom of every commercial society,
 built not on respect and love for
 humanity and sheer delight in
 living, but on respect and love for
 money and lust for material pos-
 sessions. In short: upon greed. In
 judging those who take advantage
 of the war-created shortages to
 make quick profits, we should
 remember that these people are

merely applying the law of supply
 and demand, which our capitalist
 society has long preferred to the old
 law of the "just price." The
 present evils flow from the form of
 society the Western World has
 chosen, and perhaps the real signi-
 ficance of the condition in which
 Holland finds herself in 1947, is the
 light it throws on the shakiness of
 a social structure based upon the
 fundamentally unsound and evil
 principles of modern civilisation:
 the principles of commerce, profit
 at any price, and material acquisi-
 tion, which, when it comes to the
 test, to the show-down, are seen to
 be far more powerful stimuli of
 human conduct than all our hazy
 notions of the brotherhood of man.

It would be foolish to attribute
 the evils I have mentioned to the
 Dutch character. The lesson
 applies to all acquisitive societies.
 What has happened in Holland
 could have happened here.

The Solitary

N. L. BRIGHT

I did not feel alone.

There was the ivy whispering on the wall—
 Or just its silent stone.

There were the steadfast trees.

(In spring, summer, autumn, or in winter
 I never tired of these).

There were blue hills; and brooks;

Cotton-wool clouds; and wind-fluffed calves; and gorse;
 And languid-flapping rooks.

(Yes, there were always birds—

And almost always wild flowers—to elude
 Artifices of words).

And then there were the stars,

Scattered like pebbles on a stretch of sand;
 Raindrops on thorns; bough-bars

Crooked across moonlit ways;

And the great sun. How could I be alone
 One minute of my days?

We Make Their Corn

JAMES FARRAR

Now French has gone and got himself killed, and I am lying here waiting for the fog to close in again.

It was all because I couldn't stand the sight of blood: that's why I deserted. When I was inoculated I nearly died. Then later they gave us embarkation leave and I knew I couldn't stick it, going out to some filthy Libyan massacre. It didn't matter whether it was our chaps who were slaughtered or the Itis, it was all the same to those vultures. Sometimes when the barracks windows were booming at night in the wind I used to lie awake and think about it, and then fall asleep to dream of some great Hun chasing me with a bayonet, my feet like lead so that he caught me and got me up against a rock and pushed the blade in long and smooth, right into my guts, and gave that twist. . . . I got French to come with me, he was pretty browned off, missed his wife he said, so we cleared together. He was only married three months ago.

It's been like this for two days, this fog. We were glad of it, although we couldn't find our way around properly. We aimed to get to the town on the first day, but our chaps were after us pretty smart so we had to lie low most of the time, in ditches or anywhere we could find. We had some iron rations with us, and French brought his bayonet, which he used to chop up a rabbit I caught by falling on it in the old poacher's way (even that rabbit turned my stomach over when it was skinned). We cooked it on the quiet in a big wood. That wasn't bad for the first day's grub, but I haven't had anything today yet.

Well, we didn't do badly at all

till we got in this stubble field. But this is like one of those evil places in Africa you read about: a spirit must dwell here which can't tolerate things going right. Yet it's only a sloping cornfield in a valley, and they get a good harvest from it each year.

Visibility was down to two or three yards when we got here. We came in under the hedge in the way we'd learned to, and started down the slope, treading very carefully. It hasn't been cleared more than a month and the stubble's terribly brittle and noisy. When we'd gone a little way we stopped and listened for a moment without breathing. French looked at me and I looked at him. It was all blanketed, a dead hush. The hedge trees just behind us showed faintly, like brooding smoke in a steam world. But otherwise we had it all to ourselves, a little secret world with blank walls, diameter about eighteen feet. Quite weird, it was. We listened with the condensed vapour running down our foreheads into our eyes, the broken earth at our feet all glistening with frosted chalk and a few ice-dewed grass leaves jutting from the old stubble. French knelt and patted the earth, I don't know why. We carried on for a bit into the valley. I thought I could see a slight intensification of fog at the bottom which might be a belt of trees.

Have you ever tried walking down a frosted stubble field quietly? It just can't be done, especially in army boots. The last time we stopped to listen our hearts nearly gave up beating, because we could hear several voices shouting at the summit. I knew they were after us. Anyway they didn't start coming

down for a little while, so we made it to the trees.

It turned out to be only a narrow strip of trees, so we decided not to risk staying there. We reconnoitred along the bottom of the field. All of a sudden we came across an old grey horse which stood there looking at us as if it was a fog-genie grown out of a bottle. I went up to it to pet it, needing a little solace I suppose, but it shied away and gave a little snort.

"For God's sake keep it quiet," hissed French. Then of all things the horse started whinnying like mad.

French wasn't the same man. In a second he ran at it, getting his bayonet out. He bashed its nose with the handle. It whinnied again. There was intense fear on his face as he looked round at me, then he got both hands on his bayonet and drove it hard into the horse's chest.

That stopped it. The horse stood there for a moment with the handle jutting from it, curling its lips right back from its broken teeth and giving a funny bubbling sort of laugh, and its eyes turned right over to the whites. Then it went down thump, all flying legs; and its head hit the ground after it like a mallet.

But they had heard us. They came rushing down like a high wind over the stubble, and I had only just time to dodge back among the trees before they loomed up and caught French standing there despondently looking at what he had done. Poor devil, he was thinking of that wife he wouldn't get to now. He went and pulled out the bayonet, though, like a bung from a barrel of blood. That horse literally gushed, and I was almost too sick to stand. But French went for the sergeant, and the sergeant, terribly white-faced, clouted him down with his rifle-butt. French got up again and tried to kill the

sergeant, who went on sloshing him until he gibbered and screamed but wouldn't stop fighting, and still the sergeant swung his rifle in fear of the bayonet. Then French was on the ground with his head split open.

They carted him off, and I came out of the trees almost retching. Then the fog cleared. It was just gone in a breath of wind and there was I standing in the open with the sergeant and eight men carrying French up the slope not twenty yards away. I flopped behind the only cover I had—the horse. Clean into a huge puddle of its blood, I the blood-hater. It stuck to me all over like warm oil, even over my face, with a faint foulness. I was quietly sick and then quite suddenly I didn't care about it any more. I have got over my fear. Now they are almost at the far hedge: so I get up. But what's the use of being free now? Look at me. The stuff is clotted on me from head to foot and the more I try to rub it off the more it spreads. Well, I haven't got much of a chance now, so we'll make a bargain, sergeant, you and me. I'll stand here in the open, and if you see me you can have me. French, you fool, you've left your bayonet behind.

Now I've got a feeling of clarity which came to me like the wind that blew away the fog. Why did I ever worry about blood? Now that I've got over it it seems to me that blood is just like the corn on this hill and the sun that grows it, they just happen and there's no significance, no reason to wrap thoughts around them. This field drinks blood and rain alike, it all makes the corn grow.

Hallo, this is it, one of them has turned. He points, his shout floats down the field. They dump French, back they come, clumsy lot of runners they are. Funny how one's comrades turn into bloodhounds.

when the man at the top says "Go!" Poor old French lolling up there making next year's corn.

I just stand at ease waiting for them, they congratulate themselves that I am going to surrender. I once read a book by a man who said everything should be free and natural under the sky, like trees

and grass and running water. It shall be.

Oh Sergeant, come and look at me, am I standing at ease correctly? Well-drilled, that's me. Feet twelve inches apart, shoulders back, right hand in the palm of the left, bayonet in the palm of the right hand, keep still my heart. . . .

Halt for the Progressives

ALEXANDER SOUTH

Before the war intelligent people in Britain belonged to or were on the verge of joining or lived in fear of being persuaded to join, a Progressive Movement. There were no retrogressive movements, for even the Fascists were good, progressive fellows according to their own lights. These progressive movements were not only quick to note the small evils, like the inelasticity of the divorce laws, the suffocating effect of collar and tie on the male throat, the melancholy of the English Sunday and the standardised nature of most contemporary education, but were also deeply conscious of the greater evils of poverty and war. They held meetings against war; they wrote books against war; and had various solutions for its abolition; and although these solutions were so widely assorted and opposed in method that no progressive Prime Minister could be expected to put them into effect at the same time, it fairly took the progressive breath away when war actually did break out.

For this was heresy. How could there be a war when the decent-minded, intelligent Briton had so exerted himself to prevent it? It made one instantly doubt whether there had been any point in reading the Right or Left books, in

attending meetings about war, in joining societies and passing resolutions. Perhaps it might have been wiser to live a sequestered life, browsing pleasantly over books and music. What sense was there in troubling about a world which refused so adamantly to act on one's good advice?

But the war was there, and it bit deep into the spirit of the British progressive because he had experienced war imaginatively so often before. And now the war has passed away; and after over eighteen months of peace no new progressive movements have appeared, and those surviving from before the war are already old. The people belonging to progressive movements now are mostly old too, and their ideas are stale. Thus echoes of Marx's *Das Kapital*, based upon the facts and statistics of expanding British imperialism in the early nineteenth century, can still be heard within the withering British imperialism of 1947. Whispers of disarmament, federalism and world government still survive. There are still nudists, vegetarians and sex reformers; they have their societies and circulate their little papers. So many of these elderly progressives suffer from high blood pressure, and whether this complaint is due

to the weakening effects of idealism and too intense cerebral activity, as D. H. Lawrence alleged, it is impossible to say; but their voices have become ragged and chiding.

Even the gods of the pre-war progressive movements have passed into a twilight. Dr. Joad and Bertrand Russell, having abandoned their most objectionable ideas, now parade the rest, with most of their erstwhile gusto and irresponsibility, in Brains Trusts. Others, like Middleton Murry, content themselves with interpreting events which they no longer hope to control, and like the Air Ministry during the previous summer, they see only bad weather ahead.

This virtual decay of the pre-war progressive movements is sad enough, but the inability of contemporary society to produce new movements is calamitous. For although progressive movements failed to avert the last war, it would be as reasonable to discard them on that account as to repudiate faith as a human quality because it has never yet moved a mountain. They are centres of enthusiasm, pointers to the vitality of the nation; and they affect its mental life as purgatives affect the human body. A progressive movement may never produce a new idea. Inevitably, however, it gives old ideas a contemporary slant, a new sugar coating, so that they become palatable again; and it challenges other ideas which may be bad as well as old. Neither may a progressive movement ever achieve its ultimate objective, and the very condition of its existence is that if it does so, it will certainly die. Yet it does endow ideas which otherwise would be merely perfectionist cravings and dreams, with contemporary vitality and relevance, and thus root them down to earth. And because there are no new progressive movements the intellectual

life of Britain is stagnant. There are no new controversies, and the old controversies have been outstripped by events, and become unreal. Why is this so? If the Government were as interested in the intellectual life of the nation, as it is in its economic life, it would immediately set up a Commission to enquire into the subject.

What would be the findings of such a Commission? It is possible to give various speculative answers. This Commission would almost certainly decide that as an amputation of a main limb temporarily affects the human body and mind, so a great war affects a nation. The British people are still dulled, tired and bewildered, incapable either of producing new prophets or of recognising them if they appeared. The Commission would also find that while intellectuals, revolutionaries, artists, poets and humanitarians flourish in an expanding imperialism, they fall away within a contracting imperialism. Indeed the economic condition of contemporary Britain, wherein no individual can starve and yet no individual knows plenitude, denies both the generous impulse and the impulse to revolt. The Commission would also find that since a Labour Government, which represents the popular idea of a progressive government, is in power, the critical impulse amongst publicists and most ordinary people has been silenced. Revolutionary movements and individuals grow apace only when their opposites are in power; for instance, the Soviet Union has not yet produced a second Karl Marx, and if one did appear, M. Stalin would allow him very short shrift. Finally the Commission would find that in contemporary Britain the young people are cynics, and only old people are idealists. It would also hint that if the present Labour Government, which embodies the hopes and dreams of old

men, fails, the drift amongst people under forty will be towards anti-parliamentary political organisations.

So much for the Commission which would only skim the surface of contemporary problems. There are more fundamental reasons for intellectual stagnancy within Britain today. It has in the first place come as a deep shock to the progressive to discover how the war has diminished Britain as a World Power. It was undoubtedly arrogant, but prior to 3rd September 1939 the least insular Britons still firmly believed that their country was the centre of the world. Progressive movements here would appeal to the Government to take the lead in disarmament or applying sanctions or challenging Fascism or applying collective security. There was an instinctive belief amongst people that Britain had only to speak, and the world would follow. It is now, however, clear that Britain has become as impotent in contemporary power politics as was, say, France prior to the outbreak of war. Now Britain can disarm, dismember her Empire, propose World Governments or European Federations, but the condition of the world will remain the same. Thus the Nonconformist Conscience, which has always dominated British foreign policy and endowed it with Messianic purpose towards Europe and the world, is silenced, and there is no longer any point in holding meetings against war within Britain. It is only possible to consider the condition of the United States and Russia, and silently pray.

Even more shattering in its effects on the intellectual life of the nation, has been the transformation of Britain during the war years from a creditor to a debtor nation. All pre-war political thinking was

based on the assumption that the Western World at least had attained the Age of Plenty, yet in post-war Britain the problem is no longer one of Distribution, but of Production. And so many cherished ideas must be discarded. For example, it is impossible in face of recent Government White Papers describing our economic plight to maintain the abundance theories of Social Credit and Technocracy. Temporarily this scarcity of essential raw materials and foodstuffs must condition both our living and our thinking. Coal miners and land workers have always been more important than intellectuals, and the latter, to their credit, have seldom disputed it; but the fact has never been more crystal clear than it is today.

Undoubtedly new progressive movements will arise here, in spite of this transformation of Britain's state, both external and internal. They must, however, wait on events. If, for instance, atomic power can be employed to peaceful purposes, and so provide a substitute for Coal and Oil Power, then again the Age of Abundance may be within our grasp. Yet it might be wiser to proceed on the assumption that Britain has a population of forty-five million people dependent on resources capable under present conditions of yielding a high standard of life to only half that number; that its vital raw materials have been squandered by the long mismanagement of *laissez faire* capitalism; that its capital equipment is out of date, its land neglected and its people tired. Work must necessarily be hard here for many years yet, and thinking will be hard and realistic only when the whole accumulation of disaster is faced. There will be no vital impulse towards a new and better society until all perceive clearly the utter ruin of the old.

A Cure for Seasickness

RICHARD TRETHERWEY

At Christmas, 1940, I made up my mind that the war was going on for ever. As far as I remember, I do not think that British strategy or my own particular brand of politics had anything to do with it: but I was twenty-one years old and I had been consistently seasick for six months. I had experienced Plymouth, the Orkneys, Dakar, Freetown, Barcelona, Brest, with the yellow eyes and the weak knees of one for whom the Battle of the Atlantic was not the mine or the submarine, but simply bloody great waves and bad weather. I was also obsessed with the size of the sea: abjectly terrified by it, in fact. I would have committed suicide if our skipper hadn't decided, at last, that I was completely useless and sent me ashore at Gibraltar to recuperate.

There was no room for me in the Base Ship at Gib., and the Dockyard Quarters were full. So I was billeted in the town at the house of Señor Diego Ronda: chef at the *Campana* Restaurant, a terrible little underground café in Engineers' Lane. Diego had a flat over the café, and it was there that I arrived with all my gear in a gharry on Boxing Day. The authorities, as usual, failed to warn Diego, and I can see myself now: banging on the iron door of the patio, surrounded by my decaying luggage—a kitbag, hammock, green suitcase; ditty-box tied up with string, gasmask, lifebelt, and the usual parcel of books I couldn't jam in anywhere.

The gharry driver and the horse surveyed me with interest. It was a very old horse, a relic of the Gibraltar Racecourse at North Front. "Shall I wait, Señor?" said the gharry driver. "No, it's all

right. *Es'ta bien*," I said, very boldly, and banged again. To my horror, part of the grille fell off into the road. Suddenly a window shot up and an enormous woman looked down at me. "No sailors here!" she cried, "What do you think this is, eh?" I tried, desperately, to speak. It was as though I was dreaming, and my voice wouldn't work. "*Tengo una papira de la Cormorante . . . marinero Inglese . . . domicilio aqui! aqui!*" I called up. The window went down with a bang and shot up again almost immediately, like a harlequinade. "Diego!" the voice screamed.

At once, like a slot machine on the pier, the scene went into action. There was a drumming on the stairs, and a little fat Spaniard flung open the gate. "Welcome! Welcome!" he cried, and before I had time to recover he kissed me as though I was his son, and began piling my luggage on himself with frightful energy. It was, of course, Diego. I followed him up the stairs, trying to help, but merely dropping everything.

"You are welcome," said Diego, "We often 'ave the sailors living 'ere: we are very 'appy to 'ave you." "*Gracias, muchas gracias*," I said, not very brilliantly. "Franco is a bastard," added Diego, as an afterthought. I discovered afterwards that he always said this to Englishmen.

Before I got to my room I knew all the family history. Diego had escaped into Gibraltar from Spain in 1937: mainly to avoid military service in Morocco. He was really a coachman, but he had taken this job at the *Campana* to make ends meet. He knew nothing about cooking. (I very soon discovered

this. I saw him, on one occasion, put a cauliflower through the mincer. And, on another, he was cutting meat with a small axe and sliced at least four inches off his long black oiled hair that hung down over his eyes like duckweed). But he adored his wife (she was the enormous woman) who was called, with a sort of wild injustice, Primavera. He adored her uncritically, too, very much as Doctor Johnson adored Tetty. O Primi and Diego, how often have you embarrassed me as I sat at your table struggling through my supper of chickpeas-soup! Although they were both, I suppose, well over fifty, they behaved like lovers of twenty—except that Diego was completely unembarrassed. Primi was a little more—what shall I say?—refined.

There they would be, wrestling and pushing and blushing on the old rexine sofa: slipping about like a couple of ardent mammoths. "Diego! Diego! Señor Don Diego!" Primi would cry, looking up archly at me from under her enormous eyelids, "How can you carry on like this in front of Don Ricardo? Look! See! You are embarrassing him, poor fellow. Ah! Stop it now! Is the soup to your liking, Don Ricardo? And the omelette: such a delicacy! Oh!—stop it, Don Diego, you are not a man, you are a beast! Go back to the café, to the kitchen, where you belong! The coffee is in the spirit-lamp, Don Ricardo. Oh!—stop it, you beast. Not now: what do you think I am? Eh? Why did I marry you—you—*groom!*" But she would blush with pride and give him a resounding kiss on the top of his bald head all the same.

Primi and Diego had two children: Ana Marie and Arturo. Ana Marie was about the same age as myself, but with the yellow face and the dark eyes of the consumptive. She used to remind me of Clickett in a Spanish edition of

David Copperfield. Primi didn't like her daughter much: she had let the family down by contracting T.B. And, worse than that, Ana Marie had had a baby by a Spanish private in the Gibraltar Defence Force. The Spanish private, almost immediately, had fallen 800 feet on his head from a gun-post on North Front and dashed his brains out, much to Primi's delight. And she used to rub it in about the baby. The baby looked like a little rock-ape, only not so good-looking, and screamed all day by the fire in a sort of wicker parrot cage. "You're a bad lot!" Primi used to cry, as Ana Marie coughed into her handkerchief and crept about the house dusting and disarranging everything. "Thank goodness your father and I held ourselves back: thank goodness we kept respectable. And then there's Don Ricardo—look at him! He's kept himself to himself. He knows how to keep respectable."

This was embarrassing: for often in the mornings, after I'd had the middle-watch and wasn't on duty until twelve, Ana Marie used to come into my room, dusting and fiddling about, while I was still in bed. She used to terrify me by staring at me with her huge, agonised eyes. Often I felt that I must jump out of the window in order to escape.

I never discovered much about Arturo, Primi's son. He was a barber, but (according to Diego) had "got politics." At all events, he worked in the underground movement in Spain: ostensibly travelling on a round from La Línea to Cadiz with a line in stationery, pills and rubber goods, but really distributing Communist literature. All the six months that I lived with them, Primi and Diego never heard a word. They used to get very worried.

And my room! It was white-

washed and, I suppose, the best in the house. There was a brass single-bed and a yellow wash-stand. Diego had found—God knows where—three English books, and had them displayed on a shelf: Book II of a three-volume edition of *The Woman in White*; Piner's "*Guide to Bath and Wells*" and an original edition of *Pears' Encyclopædia*. There were also three pictures: one of Stalin, one of the infant Jesus and a set of views of Alicante. And I shall be doing truth a disservice if I do not mention my *pôt-de-chambre* on which Primi painted my initials and which, weeping, she pressed into my hand as a memento the day I left for England.

There was one other lodger: Sam, a Negro. He was a huge fellow and worked as a labourer in the Dock-

yard. He wore a fez and was always very polite to me. Diego told me one day that Sam had been a eunuch in a harem at Algiers, but, weary of the seraglio, had come to Gibraltar. I never dared ask Sam about this: but once a month he used to come home very drunk, on medio-medio, and beat, very softly, a little drum he kept hanging over his bed and sing to himself all night.

Yes: I can still see myself, sitting on the edge of the bed, writing home: *Dear Mother, I am ashore now so you need not worry about my being in a ship. I have got a comfortable billet and they are very nice people . . . very nice indeed. . . .*

Anyway, to come to think of it, all this is the only cure I have ever known for seasickness.

Children at Football

MALCOLM NEVILLE

Like gold-fish in the green field's bowl,
Proud of their jerseys the children played football.
To them the moving legs were great events,
With those noble deeds their bones grew crisp.

In the forest they built on the streets
Humming-bird memories flashed in the bushes,
And strangely antique men in skins like mackintoshes
Were secret wizards or long wandering kings.

In grief our tiny faces wrinkled like silk
But in joy were fat with our mirth,
And all the while the unseen year rose like a wave and broke,
Toppling into sudden festivals.

Their mouths worked, but time stole away
Their pungent cries, they shrank like Alice
Into the fresh garden of the past,
And I, grown grossly bigger, knew
Children, like princes, ask hunchback life for the dagger.

Two Sonnets

JOHN LE MAISTRE

SWAN

Silver the new-bathed stones beneath my feet
Freckled the margin of the placid lake,
Where silent reeds had bowed themselves to make
A shadow border in the mid-day heat.
Then softly from beneath the distant trees
A swan slid out and, ripples arrowing wide,
Moved up the lake, while mirrored to its side
Another mimicked. Soon a wanton breeze
Shivered the water and the image gone,
Only one bird remained, its searching bill
Ruffling its plumage unconcerned. But still
Swims in my memory the vanished swan
Sheltered secure from every envious breath.
Thus shall remembrance triumph over death.

HIROSHIMA

Is this the place? This pulpy earth, this stink
Of wormy carcass and indifferent bone, the land
We've sought so long? Here the shadows shrink
Like snakes from our approach. The windy sand
Sickens our nostrils like a fulsome smoke
And lidless eyes, muscled by maggots, leer
Their grave displeasure. Were these spongy folk
Our enemies? Is there perhaps some secret here
That soon we too shall know? The charnel mouths
Are dumb. The shrivelled hands and arms, congealed
In gestures of unearthly eloquence, arouse
A surfeit pity in us. Never shall this field
Be graced by soothing monuments. No command
Could pluck a Lazarus from this blistered land.

Fulfilment

ROSS NICHOLS

The beauty of the hand is dead,
determined fate will have it so:
and hair is gone to dark leaves waving
against the night, and the muscled flow
of limbs and rampioned chest both go
into the undulant and pillared hills,
upland and mountain walls.

The bony head
goes to the yawning caverns of the dead.
Who then shall say
up into what transforming mountain stole
the bird that was the soul?
soul from the hand loosed where it set by day
hooded and blind and old
now up the milky waterfalls
trembles her spray-wet wings
and finds anew all things.

Return

PHOEBE HESKETH

He went beyond his quiet Eden seeking
The wilder beauty of the wilderness,
And beauty there he found
In the barbarous bright tangle, in the ground
Soft-trodden with the luscious fallen fruits
Of stripped and shaken trees,
In the sensuous air
Deep breathing with a stolen sweetness, in the fair
Fragile falling falling everywhere
In profligate confusion.

And he was caught unknowing in the tangle,
Stripped naked to the heart, and bound in bramble harshness,
And his was a cordon of thorns,
And thorns his treading.
And thirsting he sought fruit, but trees were friendless,
Unshedding of their coolness, and his bedding
Of grasses
Surrounded the long wakefulness of anguish
With stabbing coarse-tongued malice.

Until the young, barefooted dawn came slowly
Lifting the weight of darkness from his sight,
Moving with her star towards the morning,
And draining the malefic moon of light.

He, fearing still, yet followed, footsore, bleeding,
And found the bars of sunrise in the gate
He once despised, broke through in strong self-seeking,
Found rest, too long delayed but not too late.

REVIEWS

A Coat of Many Colours

Herbert Read. *Routledge*, 8s. 6d.

I do not pretend to have yet read all the seventy-one "occasional essays" that make up this book; though I shall—every one. They are not, however, to be hurried through but pondered thoughtfully at leisure; otherwise one perceives their range and diversity but misses that underlying unity which characterizes one of the most interesting contemporary collections of critical essays. And so I have preferred to savour more deeply about a third of them, relating them to their author's other major writings in an attempt to perceive the unifying note giving force and direction to this volume. Perhaps a unifying note, for there may well be more than one; but certainly one is what may be called Mr. Read's concern with the idea, individually and corporately, of the Good Society. To an age as preoccupied as ours with means, to the neglect of ends, that in itself would make this a book of unusual significance.

That a considerable number of these essays deal with problems of art ("Realism and Superrealism"; "Art and Ethics"), or consist of studies of individual painters (from Raphael to Paul Klee), poets (from Milton and Herbert to Hopkins and Yeats) or prose writers (from Stendhal to Joyce) constitutes only a surface paradox: it lends point and purpose to the principles on which all Mr. Read's critical work is founded, aesthetic and literary, political or economic.

These principles find their common basis in Mr. Read's Anarchism, on which there are two essays here—"A Community of Individuals"; "The Paradox of Anarchism"—as well as the analogous and very self-

revelatory study of Eric Gill. "Anarchism," Mr. Read reminds us, "is a society without a ruler; not one without law and order"; and still a *society* because "Human beings according to their needs and sympathies will *spontaneously* associate themselves into groups for mutual aid; will *voluntarily* organize themselves into an economy which ensures the satisfaction of their needs." In that "*spontaneously*" and "*voluntarily*"—the italics are Read's—appears that philosophical optimism, that belief in man's intelligence and goodwill, which lies at the root of his creed. It is Kropotkin's doctrine of Mutual Aid; and its frustration so far Mr. Read sees as due to our adherence to the outmoded "arbitrary boundaries of the modern State."

Now the abolition of the national State would not necessarily result in an Anarchistically regulated world; others besides Anarchists are beginning to see it as a necessary preliminary to enduring peace. But it is in the means by which this world pacification is to be attained that Mr. Read is at laudable variance with so many of his contemporaries. Inplacable enemy of monopolistic capitalism and the maldistribution of property, he is just as firmly opposed to what is too readily assumed to be its only alternative: State Socialism. When the individual becomes a mere unit in a mechanized whole it makes little difference in principle, whether the machine is capitalistic "Big Business" or State-nationalized industry: the essential dignity of man is violated, his spiritual nature subordinated or denied.

"Anarchism," writes Mr. Read in "The Paradox of Anarchism," "implies a universal decentralization of authority, and a universal simpli-

fication of life." It is statements like those that compelled that profound Christian individualist and anti-mechanist, Eric Gill, to confess, as we are now told, on the publication of Read's pamphlet, *The Philosophy of Anarchism*: "I find it difficult to discover anything I don't agree with in it." They both concurred on the fundamental necessity of an individual change of heart, change of life, if mankind was to be saved; though, in effect, they differed profoundly as to how that change of heart was to be brought about. Mr. Read rejects the possibility of its realization through a reintegrated Christianity or by supernatural means:—

Religious thinking always involves an act of faith—a belief in supernatural revelation. That kind of belief I do not profess. I am essentially a materialist. But as a materialist I find myself involved with certain intangible and imponderable elements which we call emotion and instinct, and to those elements I, as a materialist, must give due attention. I cannot construct a credible world without making provision for their active play and satisfaction. ("Socialist Realism.")

Truth is subjective; Man's ultimate peace and happiness lie within his own realization—here Read's thought is tangential to the Existentialists—provided only that he can break the fetters clamped down upon his spirit, and the bonds of State control or capitalistic exploitation hampering his person.

Mr. Read, that is to say, is essentially a Romantic, a believer in the ultimate perfectibility of man through the integrated personality of each individual. In his art studies he is impatient of what he calls "the dreary science of aesthetics" except for determining objectively whether a thing is beautiful by assessing "its possession of certain harmonious proportions which are present in nature and imitated in works of art." ("Art and the People.") To him, that is, the work of art is the well made, well

designed article of just proportions, and pleasing form, made by a man who himself owns (and Mr. Read maintains this is still possible in the age of the machine) his tools of production and works within an economy of use instead of an economy of profit—"a culture of pots and pans," as he described it in that excellent essay, *To Hell With Culture*, (sadly missing from this volume). He abhors as false the distinction "fine" in the Fine Arts: they would not exist as such in his ideal society. He quotes with approval Gill's "The artist is not a special kind of man but every man is a special kind of artist." And it is only as "a special kind of artist," contributing to that other magnificent conception of Gill's: "To make a cell of good living in the chaos of the world," that he studies and evaluates the painters, poets, sculptors, architects or prose writers in the essays which make up the bulk of this book. As Read sees it, a state of reciprocity exists between the anarchist society and its members: such artistic production for use or enjoyment, not for profit, is necessary to the health and well-being of society; but, in turn, it can only be generated from such a non-compulsive milieu as he conceives. He once approvingly quoted Giovanni Gentile as saying "Spiritual activity works only within the plenitude of freedom"; and in his "Socialist Realism" essay here he is at some pains to prove such a belief was integral to Marx himself—however misguided his alleged disciples have become, or however wryly we smile to-day at the conception: "The State will wither away . . ."

I have said that Mr. Read is a Romantic, but the word applies only to his personalist and anarchist philosophy. In the luminous clarity of his prose, his concern for it (see "English Prose" here), and for

that order, harmony, and just proportion implicit in his theories of æsthetics; in his power of direct, unequivocal statement such as that already quoted about "religious thinking," in his declension from all exaggeration or excess—in his tendency, in fact, to understatement: in all these he is a Classicist in the best traditions. This duality in Mr. Read goes very deep, but the resultant conflict is never dis-

ruptive. That is why his idea of the good society, both in its individuals and in its "cells of good living" is so attractive. It can appeal to people of the most diverse temperaments and for a multiplicity of reasons. For here is a self-confessed materialist "engaged," as a recent reviewer of his autobiography said, "in a passionate advocacy of the things of the spirit."

HERMANN PESCHMANN

A Free House ! Or the Artist as Craftsman

Being the writings of Walter Richard Sickert. *Macmillan, 25s.*

Sickert knew all about it. Half continental, wholly an artist of the widest range and in the great tradition ("If we knew Degas, Degas knew Ingres, and so on, *ad infinitum*"), he not only lived in this country but loved it. Always in demand as a talker and a writer, his ideas have not before been easy to refer to. True, once found, they stick in the mind; thus to artists, this selection of his writings will read like "Hamlet":—

New what is the characteristic of Giotto? His ability to express emotion of the most poignant kind in a realistic manner. His angels of the entombment not only fly like swallows; they are really blubbing, fit to break their little hearts. Consequently they break ours.

Bond Street and . . . all the boredom of its accumulated and panic-stricken negations.

The young apprentices in the studios of the old masters were squaring up drawings and under-painting works already commissioned. There was no sentimental nonsense about it. From the tenderest age they were driven and hustled in the field of drawing, much as the sweated tailors and tailoresses are driven in the modern realities of dress-making. The whole thing was based on a *Realpolitik* as far removed from the cloudy æsthetics of to-day as possible.

. . . the top-dog instinct of the man who pays is to torment the workman as much as possible, even to the point of

ordering the painter to destroy the flower-like perfection of the *mot juste* by tautology, however lumbering and murderous.

Though I am a poor man, I can afford to buy a book of Hardy's a year, therefore I have had the opportunity of learning to love Hardy, but I doubt very much if the earnings of literature would enable Hardy to buy a picture by me or anybody else. Something in this system is wrong.

All figures enact their scenes in a somewhere. I am inclined to think that, in good composition, the order of consideration must be from the somewhere to the figures in it.

You can pick where you like. Sickert's writing has a memorable quality all through. It is to the point; in the vulgar tongue; with the raconteur's gift; and there is no writing on art remotely like it.

Sickert tells this story against himself:—

I was inveighing the other day against the growing influence of experts and critics in our modern market in the presence of Steer—I think I called them pontiffs. "Well, you are a pontiff yourself," said Steer, laughing. Which is true in a manner. But if I print opinions they are open to be "pleaded against contradictorily," as they say in France.

Sickert was no pontiff. His dialectic of setting against a thesis, often merely fashionable, its antithesis, is much more, or should be much more, the normal practice of criticism than Sir Osbert Sitwell suggests. We are the cranks, not Sickert.

In a lengthy introduction, con-

taining a superb portrait of the artist as the man he knew, Sir Osbert does not tell us as much as he might of Sickert as a writer. Sickert has set an example in objectivity and straightforward explanation to all writers on art. And the patter! Has there ever been anything like "Italia! Italia!"—Lamb included? Accretions are easily recognisable as such. They are not there to mystify.

Sickert could afford to be disinterested. In the first place he, rather than Duncan Grant, on whose head he placed the crown, was the king who could do no wrong. Then, he was under no compulsion to disguise deficiencies, or to defend the indefensible. He revealed what he knew, none better, with the ease of the "old trouper," without betraying the suspicion of a "cover-up." And then—but it must be somewhat tactless to recall his, the spacious days of journalism!

Another point needs qualification. It is suggested that Sickert was outside art "politics" because he belonged to none of the "political parties" in art. But, to mix the metaphors, Sickert, as does our Mr. Wolfit, toured his own troupe. His influence has been immense, reaching from the R.A. to the limbo of the No-Jury exhibitions. It must increase after the publication and success of this book, which is obviously epoch-making. As has been said, Sickert's sayings have become the folk-lore of Bohemia, to be bandied about without acknowledgement. I have often wondered whether it was not the astute "politician" in Sickert that would not have his writings published in his lifetime and made his ideas somewhat difficult of access to the ordinary student. He could not have exploited Mr. Wyndham Lewis's "Art-Men" with a surer grasp of *Realpolitik* than this, by presenting them with retailable sayings free of copyright. Artists,

perhaps bedevilled with too much theory of late, have a horrid suspicion of truths other than those they imagine to be their own. Especially to the point is that one about "our quarrel with the Royal Academy is that it is not academic enough." School corridors have rung with it until the dust has almost fallen off the reproductions. Even the B.B.C. microphone has trembled delicately at the neat quasi-revolutionary phrase.

In the temperate zone that is British art, where only the seasonable breeze from Epstein's direction can ruffle, an important "political" question might be, perhaps as a result of Sickert's cunning spade-work, whether the Academy goes "Surrealist" or "Sickert." Now we ought to be ready to support an Academy under the influence of Sickert, for this reason: that it is a real possibility for the feudal conservatism of Sickert to be understood and accepted by the Academy at its best.

However that may be, here is a body of academic thought and the record of confirmed traditional practice, that has already had, and must continue to have, its effect. The practising artist is entitled to his own reactions. He can "create"; throw a temperament and the whole of Sickert's bag of tricks out of the studio—or into it, as the case might be, but he has something of substance he can get a grip on. As for the amateur, one of these cuttings from Sickert's essays is worth more to him than all the rest of the waffle that he has been, and will be, subjected to put together.

What are the main tenets of this doctrine that eventually passed the test of acceptance as Sickert's studio practice?

(1) "*Drawing is the thing!* Colour doesn't matter!" You won't find this in the book, but may I add my own contribution to Sickertiana

because such a statement from a great colourist may settle the top priority? To play fair—it is amply confirmed in the text. See “everything else will follow, if the sense of direction of line is highly cultivated!” Or this, from Sickert’s review of Mr. Clive Bell’s *Art*: “Particularly happy is the place he assigns to colour. I doubt if this place has ever been more justly assigned in words than in the phrase, ‘Colour becomes significant only when it has been made subservient to form.’”

(2) Every picture tells a story. “Great painting is illustration, illustration, illustration all the time.” Sickert did not paint a picture that was not an informal portrait of a situation, a person, a place, a building.

(3) Pictures should be painted in the studio from reference material. I cannot help feeling that Sickert’s middle-period practice was better, i.e., pictures should be painted in the studio from *studies made directly from nature*; directly to the purpose of the painting, to the improvement of both the studies and the pictures.

(4) Oil paint should be applied in considered opaque pastes, or in the Rubens method of semi-opaque glazes, preferably on a prepared dry under-painting; the brush only being used.

(5) Objects chosen for painting should be typical rather than taste-ful. Sir Osbert Sitwell says “taste, often, rather than picturesque.”

This last cannot strictly be said to be “academic” doctrine for the reason that this was an advance in taste almost peculiar to Sickert (it should be called “anti-taste” or “super-taste” to be truly Sickertian). He may have got it from France but he made it his own. Even Sickert himself could not explain this vital advance in so many words however obviously and essentially it was his practice. In

the celebrated passage that records his renunciation of the Whistlerian concept of taste he winds up thus:—

So here we have on the one hand Whistler tying Mrs. Leyland’s dress up with little ribbons, and placing bows of preordained colours at thought-out points. We have him locating her in a confused paradise of invented check-patterns, and apple blossoms, in a nowhere of his own, and producing a very wreck of a painting, while Renoir, in Paris, makes a classic of a plump little lady, standing simply in her bourgeois salon, in her black silk Sunday dress, as it was sent home to her by her dressmaker.

This in 1903—at the height of the Whistler boom—by Whistler’s star pupil who must have stood to lose by such plain speech!—and even Renoir, when compared to Sickert in this particular, though he was gifted with the surest instinct for riding the knife-edge of the contemporaneous and mediocre, did he not tumble more and more into the neo-romantic, the neo-classic, the neo-pagan, and “the eternal nude” as we have had the pleasure of hearing it called lately? So much so that, seen from this angle, the life-development of Renoir’s art looks better in reverse?

Sickert is the answer to more than we thought, but it would be absurd for any man to be taken as the answer to everything. There are some passages in both Blake and Sickert of the same tenor, as Sir Osbert says, but it would have been more truly critical to stress the fact that these artists are as the Antipodes. That a few of their opinions agree means less than that some of Ingres’ and Delacroix’ statements were identical; that, in Sickert’s own phrase, “the gods are all on nodding acquaintance with one another.” As *gods*, may be; but as *pets* they won’t lie down together on the same hearthrug! It is not for nothing that Sickert ignored Blake. Historical painting he often mentions; imaginative painting never—without a shrug! One can

hardly imagine the diabolical virulence with which Blake would have hissed at that anathema, compound of the down-to-earth, the man-about-town, the Rembrandtesque, the Venetian and the cantankerous codger which was Sickert! Ironically, in technical convenience Blake could claim the advantage! Sickert would have it that the proper and comfortable way of painting was in the studio from studies made from nature, but how could such a procedure compare with the ability to materialise any required model, dead or alive, in the appropriate costume and exactly the desired pose at the desired moment? If one could see, as could Blake, say, Jeremiah under a tree, sharply, whenever one wished, why bother with studies from nature, not to mention snapshots and early Victorian wood-engravings? Sickert won't lie down with Picasso either. Sickert's colour is "abstract" only on the palette; on the canvas it plays its part in traditional representation.

There is something of a paradox

behind this. While we are too close to Sickert to appreciate him at his true stature, there is that tendency, with Sir Osbert, as with Dr. Emmons, as there was with Mr. MacColl to Steer, to that attitude to *il maestro* that he was most anxious we should all avoid—the "flat-belly." But such squeamishness is neither here nor there. The only criticism, and that rather carping, could be either of detail (e.g., should not the "Jules" Laborde of the index be Charles?) or of quantity, that the standard edition of "Sickert's Literary Works" may be long delayed? One thinks, churlishly, of that "complete and unabridged edition" with annotations of the standard of Sir Osbert Sjtwell's; with a subject index; with all inconsistencies and variants, and particularly, in these days of a thousand symptomatic bob-curtseys in the directions of Art and Design (always capitals!), with his letters to *The Times* on the basic necessities—brown bread, kilts and bungalows.

RICHARD MURRY

The First Romantics

Malcolm Elwin. *Macdonald*, 15s.

Poets and Pundits

Hugh I'Anson Fausset.
Cape, 12s. 6d.

The relationship between Coleridge, Wordsworth and Dorothy Wordsworth, during the years preceding their retirement to the Lakes, offers a fascinating and inexhaustible field for research, of a kind which might be called indifferently "psychological" or "spiritual," had not both words been so dreadfully abused. But "psychological" has come to mean "psycho-analytical"—and it is the unborn science of psycho-synthesis that would be enriched by such an investigation;

"spiritual" has come to mean "nebulous"—and only a vision as precise and vivid as Wordsworth's own could enter into and illuminate the mighty workings that issued in "The Prelude" and "Frost at Midnight."

Mr. Elwin is happily free from "spiritualism." His book is primarily a chronicle of outward events, in the earlier life of Coleridge, the Wordsworths and Southey. As such, it will doubtless be useful to students, though most of the ground has been covered before and the author's style is by no means distinguished.

It is impossible, however, for a poet's biographer to avoid altogether an assessment of motives and character; and Mr. Elwin,

When he does quit the realm of dates and appointments, betrays the cloven hoof of the "psychologist"—especially in his interpretation of Wordsworth, for whom he cherishes an obvious distaste. Wordsworth, indeed, figures here largely as a foil to Coleridge; the "sublimity" of his genius is practically lost sight of in the "egotism"; and we might well wonder how the character Mr. Elwin depicts could have produced anything but the "Ecclesiastical Sonnets."

The formulæ of reductive psychology, now part of the common verbal currency of the intelligentsia, are really more than ordinarily inadequate when applied to a mind like Wordsworth's. It may, for instance, be true that a want of appreciation at home will predispose a man to revolutionary sympathies; but it is quite untrue that any such instinctive reactions can be expressed in poetry of the first order. Romantic poetry is nothing if it is not an expression of the whole man; the man, that is, who has triumphed over impulse and ratiocination alike, and become able "to envisage circumstance all calm." There is a depth of meaning to Wordsworth's own phrase, "emotion recollected in tranquillity," to which all that is precious, and self-evidently veracious, in "The Prelude" itself bears witness.

Mr. Elwin seems not to have digested this "Growth of a Poet's Mind." For all that he says, Wordsworth's poetry might be of the same kind as Southey's—an exercise of the cultured intellect, barely related to experience. It follows that no deeper insight into the complex relationship between the Wordsworths and Coleridge is to be looked for in this book.

Nor can it seriously be maintained that he has substantiated the claim on the dust-cover, that "the problems of these three men

of genius were much the same as those encountered by intellectuals in the last two wars." For while it is true that Wordsworth, Coleridge and Southey all disapproved of the First French War, and that the last two projected a "pantisocratic" community; to assimilate Wordsworth's objection to that of some modern intellectuals, or Southey's undergraduate utopia to the community envisaged by D. H. Lawrence in 1916, is surely to overlook the most distinctive characteristic of Wordsworth's response to life—a response which, whatever else it may have been, was emphatically no more that of an intellectual than D. H. Lawrence's own.

It is at the opposite pole to Mr. Elwin, in every respect, that Mr. I'Anson Fausset takes his stand. Poetry, and more especially Romantic poetry, has obviously meant much to Mr. Fausset; he has been compelled to justify to his intellect the values intuitively discerned there; and in so doing, has not only acquired some real insight into the psychology of genius, but evolved a philosophy of life, in which self-transcendence is posited as the goal.

Thus he has a clear, and generally acceptable, criterion by which to assess the achievements of his "Poets and Pundits." They are all, in his perspective, at various stages on "that path to wholeness, that growth from unconsciousness, through self-consciousness, to pure being, which is becoming, as never before, the desperate concern of the West"; and he is able, from his comprehensive viewpoint, to enter into the particular problems which beset poets so diverse as Whitman and Donne, or assign to their due place in the hierarchy pundits so mutually opposed as Kierkegaard and Santayana. For examples of Mr. Fausset's criticism at its best, I would refer the reader to the three addresses with which this collection opens, on Whitman,

Tolstoy and The Augustan Citadel respectively. But there are few writers upon whom he is not in a position to shed fresh light.

At the same time, I cannot help feeling that his procedure is occasionally facile (the word is too strong, but let that pass). He has deduced, from experience and study, certain "laws" of personal development which, though true—and that is his virtue—he seems sometimes to apply to his problems like an algebraical formula. I have no doubt that one reason for this is the exigencies of current journalism, which seldom gives the most experienced critic time to work his way into the heart of a subject, before setting his findings on record: a working hypothesis takes the place of a conclusion. And when one reflects that almost all these essays made their first appearance in the *Times Literary Supplement*; and other weekly or monthly reviews, the high level both of judgment and style, which Mr. Fausset has succeeded in maintaining, is far more surprising than the lapses.

But this explanation does not wholly content me. Why is it, I ask myself, that my admiration never quite dissolves in the excitement of revelation? Why does none of these studies *engage* me, in the way that Carlyle's early critical essays have engaged me—those essays on Schiller, Richter, Burns, in which he was using his own experience to illuminate theirs, and theirs to illuminate his own?

And this question links up with another, provoked by the "spiritualistic" phrases with which Mr. Fausset too liberally sprinkles his pages—such phrases as "Ultimate Reality," "Creative Being," "the infinite ground." What, I ask, is the actual content of this self-transcendence, which he posits as

the goal of life, to which artist and mystic alike, consciously or unconsciously, aspire?

If the answer were implicit in this book, I would not be tempted to question those phrases, whose inadequacy, I am sure, the author would be the first to admit. If each or any of these essays brought an immediate revelation of truth and beauty, in poet or pundit, it would be clear that the self-transcendence posited was that very ability "to envisage circumstance all calm" which "is the top of sovereignty." As it is, I find myself wondering whether Mr. Fausset's "sabbatical serenity" is not an Ultimate Unreality.

"To love God so and rest in His love continually," he writes in a chapter on Rilke, "it is necessary to love Him not only in the sensible world of images that reflect Him, but first and foremost in Himself, beyond all sense-perception and all self-love, in the transcendent emptiness which is His essential ground." I would not presume to question Mr. Fausset here (if I remember, Eckhardt said something very similar); but surely the proof and justification of such love is to be sought in its repercussions on earth? It is an end only if it is a beginning—the Alpha as well as the Omega.

Mr. Fausset seems to endorse this view—when, for example, he describes "the vision of eternal life peculiar to the religious genius" as "unique in its power to transform and reveal meaning in temporal life." But, paradoxically enough, this very sentence occurs in the course of a comparison between Shakespeare, on the one hand, and Dante and Milton on the other, wherein he concludes that Shakespeare alone lacked "that spiritual light beyond creatures and their becoming," which irradiates the Divine Comedy and the opening of *Paradise Lost*, Book III. I am

reminded of the dictum which he himself quotes from Coventry Patmore, "Nothing is so fatal to that 'real apprehension' which is the life of truth, as thinking about the 'infinite.'"

What I miss, in fact, in all Mr. Fausset's writing, however admirable, is the *stress* of the Divine Vision embodying itself in sensible images. Carlyle, when once he had made his own the view from the pinnacle of Weissenichtwo, abandoned it for the world of fresh experience—and incidentally abandoned literary criticism. Mr. Faus-

set, so it appears to me, remains gazing up at the pinnacle.

Perhaps the shortcoming is mine: for he, I feel sure, would regard Carlyle's behaviour as a mark of spiritual immaturity, and the very stress of *The French Revolution* would only confirm him in this belief. If so, he will know where to place me. "The Westerner," he says, "who finds the serenity of such men (the Eastern saints and sages) too cool and impersonal is himself too hot and personal." I am a Westerner—but so far unrepentant.

F. A. LEA

The Great Globe Itself

William G. Bullitt

Macmillan, 8s. 6d.

The qualifications of politicians differ. William G. Bullitt was United States Ambassador to the U.S.S.R. from 1933-36 and to France from 1936-41—two periods during which he must have learnt that tact, next to taste, is the diplomat's principal asset. Now, free of these responsibilities, he has written a book on Russia. It is a plain-speaking book, and one to be highly commended, even if in a critical estimate of it certain reservations must be made. In places his knowledge is parochial and not general enough, and in others he is historically inaccurate. For instance, he forgets that the democracy which he suggests for countries like Yugoslavia and Roumania was tried in the 'twenties and proved to be the first step towards Fascist domination. Again, in his indictment of Stalin's decision to annex one-third of Poland, he does not weigh the fact that this territory was taken earlier from the Russians at one of their least secure moments, nor the fact that in this territory there is a higher per-

centage of Ukrainians and White Russians than Poles. Again, there is an insensitivity in his treatment of citizens other than his compatriots: of the Socialists of France and Italy who are not, as he says they are, antagonistic to direct alliances with the Communists; of the British need for a loan to save them from financial inflation, which was just as necessary to them for economic recovery as it was politic for the Americans to lend it lest they should be outbidden by another country. These are defects which spoil Bullitt's premises and limit the success of the plan of his "preface to World Affairs." There are others, too, but these will appear when the book is subjected to closer scrutiny in the four sections into which it is divided.

The first part is concerned with a brief outline of Russian history: it is not especially detailed, but, within limits, it is acceptable. There is, however, one permanent fallacy which affects the whole: it is that the author takes over without modification the theory of Vernadsky (of whom wittingly or unwittingly he is a disciple) on Eurasians. The theory, if it is worked too hard, as it is here, leads to an over-

accentuation of the Mongolian aspect of the Russian temperament and so gives rise to the idea that it is necessary and natural for the Russians to live under a dictatorial regime: something like that of Catherine the Great in the eighteenth century or of Stalin today. This is a conclusion which ignores the fight for freedom put up by both Russian Liberals and Socialists almost a hundred years before the 1917 Revolution. Moreover, if the theory were true and given full rein, it is strange how Bullitt can declare, without saving clauses, that the present oligarchy will pass. Why should it? If logic proves that the present regime is totalitarian—and there can be little debate about it—surely it might stay for ever. (This is where the opening part of his thesis merges with the second.) Indeed, it will only pass when Russia has had its day as a great Power, and not through its people growing tired of being so strictly marshalled. At least this is Bullitt's conclusion drawn to a logical end, and it is significant because illogicality crops up in other parts of his work.

After this short historical survey, there follows an analysis of the present situation in terms of recent events and the future. Bullitt believes the complexity of the current scene to have been largely caused by Roosevelt's handling of public affairs: "God was kind to President Roosevelt. He had always great confidence in his luck, and his luck held. He died before the actions of the Soviet Government . . . had forced him to admit that he had lost his gamble." That gamble was his belief in being able "to convert Stalin from Soviet Imperialism to democratic collaboration," and although outwardly he seems to have failed, it is too early to write his epigraph historically. The President, as Miss Frances Perkins has shown in a

new book* about him, was a simple kindly type of man. He thought that much could be done by Christian names used at the right moment, and that a pat on the shoulder might smooth over a difficult point. "He felt himself on very good personal terms with Marshal Stalin. He liked him and found him extremely interesting. He regretted the language barrier, but he sent communications and cables to Stalin from time to time . . . When Marshal Stalin indicated in a cable that he wished to postpone action I suggested to Roosevelt that he press for further consideration and a definite answer. 'No, I don't want to appear to press him,' Roosevelt said. 'I like this man, and I want to keep on good terms with him. We can talk it over later.' " But Stalin was not duped: he replied in a similar big-hearted way and so it was that the great dictator charmed his concessions from his two Allies. A Western landing was chosen instead of an Adriatic one.

From the foregoing it looks as if the late President's approach to politics was outdated, for since the beginning of the twentieth century diplomatic relations have been becoming more and more mechanical—which accounts for their modern estrangement. But in fact it may be that the President was right and that instead of being behind his times he was only outdated in so far as he was in advance of them. Atomic bombardment—if it does not mean total annihilation—might mean the re-entry of personal politics, just as the sudden imminence of war, or a major geographical catastrophe such as a volcanic eruption or an earthquake, might re-introduce them. At any rate, the point is—and it is one which Bullitt does not allow—that after the President had achieved his first aim

**The Roosevelt I Knew* by Frances Perkins (Hammond, Hammond, 18s.).

victory, reconciliation and fair dealing *might* have followed. On the other hand, if Russia had joined the Axis, the Allies might have been defeated and all hopes of a free Western and Central Europe crushed. As it is, with an Allied victory, these hopes may be somewhat negligible, but there is greater possibility of Europe regaining her freedom than there would have been had the Axis (backed by the Soviet) conquered. So it is nowadays statesmen must grasp at straws, however frail, since the borderline between survival and extinction is perilously thin. To suggest recovery and at the same time to lay the blame of the current ills upon Roosevelt is once more that illogicality of mind appearing which is Bullitt's main weakness.

This criticism, though sharp, is meant in no carping sense: it must be made in honesty to the reader, but it should also be added that in this case the author is one of those thinkers who, erring in deductions, are nearly always right in their ultimate conclusions. Furthermore, now that the three-quarters of his book in which such a fault is uppermost has been examined, there remains the final part: the constructive side. A hope of optimism is apparent: "Austria, Hungary and Czechoslovakia all desire passionately to escape from Soviet control, and we should not consider any other independent States of Europe hopelessly lost to Soviet Imperialism." That is a good comment because it does not imply that all is lost, and because it is free from the pessimism that abounds in so many books on current affairs. On the contrary, Bullitt's comment, fully executed and applied practically, means "we should not hesitate to help the democratic elements in these States that are now controlled by Soviet puppet Governments to control those Governments." If the European

Democracies "remain separated they will be swallowed one by one," and it is in fear of such a catastrophe that he puts forward fourteen points for the preservation of a peace that can be called honourable.

Among these points, and, from Bullitt's attitude, the most essential is that mankind must cease regarding the Soviet Union as a democracy like England or America, but take it for what it is: "a totalitarian dictatorship whose aim is to conquer the world for Communism." This can only be done if the American Government (and presumably he means all Governments) will consider it a principal responsibility to print those facts which the Press for either expedient or financial reasons refrains from publishing. When this is done, and the implications realized, it will be seen that although U.N.O. should be supported it should not, because of its right to veto, be regarded in itself as a security organization: it is not an end, but merely a means for preserving peace. A plea is made, too, for the United States, along with all other true democracies, to do all in its power to resist further Soviet expansion—an object which can be greatly fostered by doing nothing that will economically strengthen the U.S.S.R. so that it may become more of a belligerent nation than it already is. This can be guaranteed to a certain extent, providing that Congress makes sure that the U.S.A. maintains air superiority. Such an action would not only assist the democracies already existing, but perhaps also encourage others to follow the same way of life so that its result in the long view would be twofold: it would raise both independent and colonial men and women to the status of democrats and make possible a strong federation of democratic States. Finally, whilst this is in process, every

effort should be made to let the Russians know what really is happening in order that they may understand where the conspiracy to keep them "on the dark side of the moon" originates.

Perhaps some of these ideas at first may sound alarmist, but they are not. A glance at the map which acts as an endpaper to this book shows the "red menace" in its true proportions because it is presented not on Mercator's projection, but from the North Pole. Confronted with such a picture, the question immediately becomes imminent as to whether the next move will be expansion southwards from a line drawn roughly from Manchuria to

the Balkans, or a jump either to Alaska or Lapland with Iceland and Greenland following in their wake. When this is grasped the position can be seen in its genuine perspective and Prospero's "great globe itself" does not seem so exaggerated a claim for the title of a diplomat's record. Indeed, as an antidote one is prompted to think that before the cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces, the solemn temples vanish, leaving not a wrack behind, the book should be widely circulated: not only circulated, but generally translated. There is need for it on the export as well as on the home markets.

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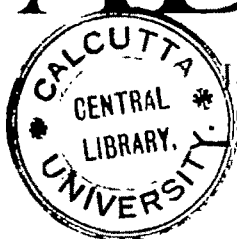
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CONTENTS OF VOLUME 24, NO. 2

JANUARY-MARCH 1948

	Page
Commentary	by the Editor 65
Five Poems	STANLEY MASON 73
Germany: October 1947 (I)	J. P. HOGAN 77
Toward Bethlehem	C. BUSBY SMITH 83
Belle Isle	VERNON SCANNELL 84
Two London Saints	RUTH COLLINS 85
Four Poems	J. T. BROCKWAY 89
Coal	I. F. G. 91
The Conservatism of N. S. Leskov	D. A. DAVIE 92
The Universities To-day	MICHAEL POLANYI 98
From "A Chronicle Writ in Darkness"	HENRY WILLIAMSON 101

FORUM:

To Bid the Dead Good-night	A. G. BADENOCH 109
----------------------------------	--------------------

REVIEWS:

Oswald Mosley's <i>The Alternative</i>	JOHN MIDDLETON MURRY 111
Nicolas Berdyaev's <i>The Russian Idea</i>	F. A. LEA 117
W. Muensterberger's <i>Vincent Van Gogh</i>	RICHARD MURRY 119
Frank Thompson's <i>There is a Spirit in Europe</i>	X. 121
George Seaver's <i>Albert Schweitzer</i> and Albert Schweitzer's <i>Civilization and Ethics</i>	JOHN MIDDLETON MURRY 124
Neville Cardus's <i>Autobiography</i>	SAM WALSH 127

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Commentary

By THE EDITOR

No sane person imagined that the war-time abolition of the Comintern marked any decisive change in Soviet policy. It was a piece of the familiar opportunism. Those who supposed that the Communists in other countries would henceforward cease to obey directives from Moscow were very naive. The resurrection of the Comintern as the Cominform was only to be expected. It hardly affects the real situation, save by making quite explicit what was fairly visible before.

What would, in quieter days, have been called the cool cheek of the document which announced the reappearance of the old firm is notable. The world is divided into two camps—"the imperialist, anti-democratic camp"—of which U.S.A. is the leader and to which Britain belongs—and the "anti-imperialist democratic camp" led by Russia, to which the satellite countries belong. That is in full accord with Hitler's cynical maxim that the secret of successful propaganda is to be sure your lie is a thumper. That the six millions who vote Communist in France believe that one may appear incredible; but one cannot be sure.

But, indubitably, the situation of the West has become more acute. The internal tension is increasing. In France the cleavage between the Communists and the rest seems now to have passed the stage where compromise is possible. Whether de Gaulle has done well or ill by forcing the issue, the future alone

will decide. When the unity of a country has so far deteriorated as that of France, when on every side men are saying that "things cannot go on as they are," then we have that ominous thing called "a revolutionary situation," in which the most decided and self-reliant force may well determine the shape of things to come. Although I have in the past severely criticised de Gaulle, I am constrained to acknowledge that he makes a better moral showing than his opportunist opponents; and the very intensity of his belief that he can save his country and that no one else can may well give the despondent and demoralized spirit of France the faith that she so sorely needs. If honesty counts for anything when matched with dishonesty—and I believe it does—then the integrity of de Gaulle, however narrow, may prevail. The cry that this is Fascism cuts no ice with me. Authoritarianism is inevitable when the democracy of compromise and consent breaks down. Which is more likely to preserve more of the values of Western civilisation—the authoritarianism of de Gaulle, or that of Thorez? I think, de Gaulle's. The immediate choice is between a civilized authoritarianism and a barbaric one. If de Gaulle is really determined to establish social discipline and social justice in France: to proceed with even-handed vigour against the social irresponsibility of both the Right and the Left, he may succeed

in leading a moral renaissance in France.

But it is of the utmost importance for the future of France that democracy in Britain should weather the storm which is now coming upon it. It will give de Gaulle—if we may assume that his bid for power is successful—a pattern and example of constitutional government. There is no solid reason to suppose that de Gaulle is not entirely sincere when he declares that his sole aim is to establish a form of constitutional government in France that shall be strong enough to work; and it is entirely consistent with that aim that he should seek to proscribe the Communist party as a form of political organisation which is directly incompatible with constitutional government. To pretend that to proscribe the Communist party is the act of a Fascist is sheer nonsense; it is an act of self-preservation imperatively required of any democracy that is vitally threatened by the Communist practice of using democracy in order to disintegrate it. For a democracy to refuse to tolerate the intolerant is to fulfil the law of its own being. If French democracy as it exists to-day is too weak to expel the vicious parasite, then a leader who has the courage to put that expulsion in the forefront of his policy and has the resolution to break the deadlock may perfectly well, in the event, justify his claim to have saved the political autonomy and freedom of his country.

Whether it is practically possible to proscribe a political organisation which attracts six million French votes and has entrenched itself in the Trade Unions is another question. That it is a moral necessity to make the attempt admits of no doubt. The leadership of the French Communist party has failed at the test. It has definitely chosen subservience to Moscow rather than

positive collaboration in the reconstruction of a democratic France. France, in order to save her own soul and maintain her unique contribution to Western civilisation, must shake herself free of this incubus. That, of course, does not mean to shake herself free of six million Frenchmen. It is probable that only a small nucleus of these—perhaps one per cent.—are eyed in the grain Communists; the greater part are either members of Trade Unions in which Communists have worked themselves into key-positions, or people who, in time of confusion, follow the strong lead which Communism apparently offers. If their party-organisation were proscribed by a leader who combined patriotism with a zeal for social justice, I doubt whether many of them would put up a fight.

The problem in Britain is not of similar magnitude. But there is a similar problem. The Communists have established a hold on one of the vital Trade Unions—that of the coal-miners. Thus they exert an influence on the precarious economy of this country out of all proportion to their real political strength. And it is now obvious to what end the influence is being used. At this particular juncture for the miners' leaders to put forward a demand for £1 a week increase in wages is plain sabotage. The miners who follow them, and threaten to strike if their demand is not conceded, may be just ignorant men who are doing what the Trade Unionists have been taught by past experience to do—namely, take advantage of their opportunity when demand exceeds supply. But their leaders know perfectly well what they are aiming at—to bring the effort at rational recovery to nothing, and to prevent that contribution which Mr. Bevin would so dearly like Britain to make to the recovery of Western Europe by resuming the export of coal. The recovery of Western Europe by its

own exertions and by mutual aid is the one thing above all others that Soviet Russia desires to prevent. Its indirect influence upon the British miners is a very powerful weapon. It is a thousand pities that the British Labour leaders are not quite outspoken about it. Even Sir Stafford Cripps who, with Mr. Bevin, stands out among them for moral courage is content with a general statement that wage-increases are not permissible in the present crisis. No sooner has he spoken than the miners make their preposterous demand. The challenge is overt. To pretend that it has not been made is moral cowardice. Not that a counter-challenge is required, or even expedient. What is required and expedient is a plain and temperate statement to the miners showing the consequences of their demand, and setting forth in simple language why it must be, and will be, resolutely resisted.

That is necessary. If the miners strike, the nation must be firm. It will, at worst, precipitate the hardship which we must endure if their demand is conceded, in whole or in part. And it is far better that the hardship should come, and be seen to come, directly from resolute resistance to an unconscionable and essentially treacherous wage-demand, than it should come gradually and greasily from the inflation that will be set in motion by conceding or compromising with the demand. Furthermore, the credit of the Labour government is vitally at stake. If this is what nationalisation of the mines really means: that the miners should behave with criminal irresponsibility in defiance of the Government and their own political leaders, then nationalisation is a futility. We are not pretending that things would be any better if the mines had not been nationalised; we are saying only that if the Government were to give

way to the exorbitant demands of men who, at their own insistent demand, have become the employees of the nation, then the whole future of democratic socialism would be hopelessly compromised.

In fact, of course, it is an anomaly that the workers in a nationalised industry should have the right to strike at all. The anomaly can be justified only if the workers in the industry behave with common decency, and reserve strike action for cases of palpable injustice which the Government, their employer, has refused to redress. The miners' threat to strike for a twenty per cent. increase in wages at the present moment is an anti-social enormity. If they are permitted to get away with it, democratic socialism in Britain had better shut up shop.

But, we repeat, it is imperative that the Government should force a moral show-down. And that can only be done by patiently and simply explaining to the miners exactly why their demand and their threat of strike-action is a moral enormity, and why it must be firmly resisted by any self-respecting Government. If the miners are so ignorant, or so cynical that a moral challenge of this kind has no effect upon them, and they insist on striking, then they should be met by punishment. They should be made really to suffer while they are on strike, and their leaders should be put on trial—for treason. It may be a novel kind of treason; in the eyes of the Law, but treason it is. To treat such a strike at such a juncture as a mere peccadillo would be morally disastrous. If the moral challenge to the miners fails—as we hope and believe it would not—then they must be made to feel that their behaviour is infamous. Their response to the need of their own country which has been at some pains to treat them with justice is to treat it with rank injustice. The

Government, if it has a sense of what is fitting, should press through legislation which declares that this particular strike is illegal.

But that, it may be said, is futile; since you cannot compel miners to work, it will achieve nothing. It will achieve something important: it will brand the miners' action as the wicked thing it is, and it will justify the trial of the leaders who have instigated it. And if it be objected that firm action of this kind would set the coalfields ablaze, and the last state of the nation will be worse than the first, the answer is that the line must be drawn somewhere at some time; and that this is the time and the place. The action may, or may not, bring the miners to their senses; but the possibility that it may infuriate them is not to be reckoned an argument against it. They are mutineers on the storm-tossed ship of democracy. The captain cannot pause to consider whether it will make mutineers angry if he puts them in irons.

The metaphor is, alas, only a metaphor. Democracy is a far more intricate and sensitive organisation than a ship. Forms of compulsion which are universally admitted as valid in the case of a mutinous crew are not admitted to be valid in the case of workers who sabotage the national effort towards recovery. And in the last resort the difference is this: that you cannot compel, by physical force, the miners to get coal. If they refuse to get coal save on terms which are disastrous to the community, there is nothing the State can do, ultimately, but starve them into submission. That sounds barbaric and horrible: it is the sanction applied constantly to millions of workers in that paradise of the new freedom, Soviet Russia, which the miners' leaders so slavishly admire. But in the last resort it is inevitable, even in a social democracy, if social democracy is not to be ruined. Ultimately,

even a social democracy must compel and constrain its mutineers, or go to perdition.

The difference is that in a social democracy compulsion and constraint can never be successfully applied except to enforce manifest justice. Justice must not only be done, but seen to be done. The difficulty is to determine when a case has arisen in which this vital principle can be made crystal clear to all save the wilfully ignorant. Such a case has now arisen with the coal-miners. In reality the old trade-union doctrine or dogma that wage-disputes must be settled by the industries concerned, without interference by the Government, has been obsolete since the war. When an industry is nationalised, the doctrine becomes an obvious anachronism. Nevertheless, the anachronism persists—it is an example of what Karl Mannheim calls a *principium medium* that has been mistakenly exalted to an eternal principle, although the social situation from which it derived and to which it was adapted has passed away. Then the *principium medium* becomes anachronistic, anarchical and destructive to society. Nevertheless, in a democracy, whose vital principle is consent, the wise statesman must bide his time till the moment comes when he can abolish the *principium medium*—the once sound but now false doctrine, the once necessary, but now destructive rule—because the great majority of the people can clearly see, in the particular case, that it must be abolished in order to save society from disaster.

Such a case has now arisen. It is of crucial importance that the wise statesman should seize the opportunity. It has already taken far too long for an understanding of the gravity of the economic situation of this country to penetrate the mind of the average citizen. But now, at last, he does begin to have a glim-

mering. Nine persons out of ten to-day have begun to understand that an all-round increase of twenty per cent. in the coalminers' wages, in the present condition of the country, is an enormity, and that it ought to be resisted. But when they think of the immediate consequences of resisting it, then those of them who are trade unionists revert to the old habit of thought which tells them that wage demands and wage strikes must always be supported, and those who are mere consumers are frightened of the idea that coal-production will cease altogether. The housewife fears for her fire, the employer for his factory. The fears are well-grounded. A miners' strike would be indeed a disaster to-day. But an even greater disaster would be to give way to it.

The duty of the Government is to make that absolutely clear to everybody capable of understanding a simple proposition, and to act with firmness, clarity and resolution on behalf of the community as a whole. The rot in the social discipline of the nation must be stopped, at no matter what cost in immediate hardship; and the miners must be made, at long last, to see that the nationalization which they have secured is not a one-sided privilege that they can abuse at will. It takes from them old freedoms, and imposes new duties, in return for their new security. If they refuse their part of the bargain, then they are traitors to the nation and deserve to be treated as such.

But, in passing this judgment, let us be clear that it is valid only in and for the present economic situation of the country. As soon as the national existence is secured, the miners may justly put forward a claim to a higher status in the community. If status is to be reckoned by money earnings, they have a claim to be better paid than most workers, whether by hand or brain: their work is more un-

pleasant and more dangerous than anybody's except the merchant-seaman's. Why should not these two occupations be more highly rewarded than any others—including the managers', the lawyers', the politicians', the Archbishops', and the Lord Chancellor's?

Indeed, it is only fair that they should. And that reflection brings us head on to the fundamental problem of social democracy, or any mass-democracy in which the system of *laissez-faire* capitalism has broken down and had to be abandoned, and the workers have demanded and obtained the economic security to which they are justly entitled. What social incentive can replace the fear of unemployment and starvation? If it is still to be money reward, then obviously the most onerous of the socially necessary occupations must be the highest paid: for men will have to be attracted into them. Very little consideration is needed to discover that this system is impracticable. The process of discovering, through trial and error, the rates of wages that would attract the right numbers into the various occupations would be unending, and the incessant fluidity intolerable. But in the last analysis, there are only two alternatives, both of which involve compulsion of labour—of everybody's labour. One is to fix an arbitrary wage-pattern for the whole economy of the country and to grade people by some system of so-called intelligence tests into their economic destinations. No mass-democracy could tolerate such a system for long. It would devastate any educational system which was based on the principle of equal opportunity by making it entirely subservient to a naked materialism. The other is to establish the principle of economic equality for all, and combine it with a system of national service.

That is, no doubt, looking a long way ahead. So far ahead that it may be dismissed as quite Utopian. But these are days in which we have to look a long way ahead. The admitted fact that if economic equality were introduced to-morrow, society would be in chaos does not imply that such a society will be impracticable thirty or fifty years hence. Mass-democracy is only at the beginning of its career in this country: it arrived only in 1945. It is bound to develop fast and far. And those who consider the problem of an adequate social incentive in mass-democracy seriously will, I think, find that the problem can be finally solved only by economic equality for all. Indeed, it seems to me self-evident that political equality must either develop into economic equality, or be itself abandoned. If a democratic society cannot progress, as a going concern, steadily towards economic equality, then sooner or later it must cease to be democratic. That may be the fate in store for mass-democracy. It may be that authoritarianism is the only way to keep alive a mass-society which insists on economic security. Certainly it will be the only way unless there is a radical change in the social morality of mass-democracy. But I see no reason to despair of such a change.

But the necessary change—to the social morality which will enable a society of economic equality to function—will not be accomplished unless a much more deliberate effort at moral indoctrination is made, and made pretty quickly, by every appropriate agency. Without the conscious effort towards a new social morality, economic security for all will produce only economic insecurity for all. The production necessary to the national existence will not be forthcoming. If that condition lasts long, the collective insecurity will be such that the

rationality of democratic government will go by the board. The cry for the Leader will go up from the bewildered masses, and authoritarianism will be established because nothing better will be possible.

But it would be foolish to imagine that a new social morality can be evoked by such a society as exists to-day. It is not an inspiring society, as it is to-day. It is only a vision of what it may become that will evoke the loyalty required to maintain it in the process of becoming: and the only possible or rational vision of a democratic society is that which sees it developing into a truly co-operative society—a society knit together by the conscious desire for co-operation in its members. The automatic and unconscious “co-operation” which occurred under *laissez-faire* liberalism and capitalism, the so-called “harmony of interests” is now fantastically inadequate: indeed, the persistence of its ethos is quite calamitous.

To overcome this dangerous persistence of obsolete social habits, which are beginning to threaten the very existence of democracy—negative freedom thus thwarting the advance to positive freedom—a great effort of democratic indoctrination is required, simultaneously in theory and in practice. Boys and girls, men and women must be educated into the capacity for authentic and conscious co-operation: that is to say, for working any productive enterprise on a basis of economic equality and functional leadership. “We are all equal, humanly and economically, but we obey the leader’s orders, because we have chosen him as the wisest and best man for the job,” is the note required. It is true enough that few enterprises run on this principle have succeeded, but that is no reason why they should always fail. They were before their

time: that is to say, in conflict with the prevailing social ethos which was adequate to keep society alive and progressive. But now the ethos of individualism is played out. Having brought mass-democracy into being, it has been killed by its own child: either thrust into the blatant knavery of the black-market; or compelled to transform itself into the mass-egoism of organized pressure groups. This phase of social evolution is obviously as transitional as it is precarious. It must end either in the triumph of one such group by capturing all the key-positions in the state, or in the supersession of individualism by a genuinely co-operative society.

Wherever, therefore, a co-operative group sustains itself, or an existing enterprise modifies itself towards co-operation, a small but real advance is made towards that transformation of the social morality which alone can save democracy from totalitarianism. Psychologically the change is one of which a real need was felt even in the period of uncontrolled individualism. It was precisely in that period that the ethos of the team-spirit, of playing the game, was developed in the extra-economic field of sport and athletics. It appears to have been a necessary compensation for the inhuman individualism of the economic sphere: so that there is nothing fantastic (as appears at first sight) in the Englishman's most decisive moral condemnation being expressed in "It isn't cricket." What is required is a transference of the higher morality back from its temporary home in sport to the substantial life of man—the work by which he earns his daily bread.

I am convinced that this idea is not Utopian—in the sense of being opposed to some profound and unchangeable element in human nature. I believe that the competi-

tive man, *homo economicus*, is a transitory phenomenon in the history of man—in the main the creation of capitalist industrialism. He no more embodies the permanent pattern of human freedom than does the noble savage of romantic imagination who turned out, on anthropological acquaintance, to be the creature of inviolable custom. The truth is that there is no permanent pattern of human freedom, except on the highest ethical and spiritual levels, where freedom is the activity of love. In so far as love begins to permeate human society, freedom becomes less illusory: and by this achievement alone can be measured the progress of humanity.

What is remarkable about the present world-crisis is that, however crudely and shamefacedly, the necessary connection of love and freedom is emerging. In the national society it is now apparent that without some other and higher social incentive than self-aggrandisement, democracy—the society of political freedom—will not survive. In the international sphere it is manifest that U.S.A. is now called upon to act as no national society has ever acted before: with disinterested benevolence, on an unprecedented scale. The conflict between this demand and the "sacred egoism" which is still the ethos of American society is fascinating, especially as it takes the form of an endeavour to persuade the average American that a colossal act of charity towards Europe is in his own interests. These interests of his, it is argued, require that he should make a great sacrifice to prevent the spread of Communism. That is true enough. But why is it in the interest of the average American to prevent the spread of Communism? There are two different and discrepant answers, according as Communism is regarded, primarily, as contrary

to individualistic capitalism, or to political freedom. Naturally, since the Americans are not yet under the necessity (as the British are) of dissociating the ideas of individualistic capitalism and political freedom, the two answers are confused with one another. But it is obvious that to prevent the spread of an anti-capitalist system by an act of colossal charity, which is more contrary to capitalism than Communism itself, is a queer enterprise. To defend capitalism by negating it is the politics of Alice in Wonderland. The Americans are vaguely conscious of the contradiction, and it causes them much mental distress. What it comes to in fact is that the Americans find capitalism effective enough still as a domestic system, yet are forced to realize that it does not work as an international system: in other words capitalism has become a local habit, a custom of the country, but no longer of the world. As far as the world is concerned, not sacred egoism, but charity is required.

Ethically political freedom occupies the middle ground between egoism and charity. It is egoism in process of transcending itself by the crucial admission that the other fellow has an equal right to his own egoism. Not egoism but the right of every man to egoism is sacred. And this is the beginning of charity. For in the society which secures to every man his right to egoism the egoism to which his right can be secured is limited more and more to what is to the common advantage of all. Unless this process of the self-limitation, through society, of egoism is continuous, however reluctant, the society of political freedom cracks and disintegrates. Political freedom is thus the means by which egoism is gradually transmuted into charity. It is the moral fermenting agent which, unless it is subdued or expelled by violence, leavens the whole lump, inevitably,

because it can be maintained alive only by a deepening of man's moral consciousness, a constant willingness to accept with no more than a vocal protest, the over-ruling of his private interests by the good of the whole.

Thus, in so far as they are found willing to defend political freedom in other countries against Communism by a very real financial sacrifice, the Americans will be acting as genuine evangelists of universal freedom in the true and positive sense: the freedom based on love; while in so far as they are seeking to defend Capitalism against Communism, they will be compelled to use means which manifestly negate the end. This marks an entirely new phase in the history of that "capitalist contradiction" of which orthodox Marxism makes so much ado. There is a real possibility that capitalism will negate itself to-day without violence; peacefully though grudgingly, transform itself into charity. The tragi-comedy of our time is that the Bourbons of the Kremlin, who have learned nothing and forgotten nothing, declare that this animal which is in front of their eyes does not exist. They have imbibed the doctrine at their mother's knee that capitalism can be transformed only by violence, and that progress by peace and freedom towards charity is a chimæra. So they are committed to making it a chimæra. Since capitalism has passed beyond the necessity of using violence to transform itself, the Communists seek to supply the missing element. And, if they are not prevented, they will.

How long they will succeed in persuading some millions of Western Europeans, against the plain evidence of their senses, that black is white: that the Imperialism and anti-democracy is on the Western and not on the Eastern side of the iron curtain, nobody

knows. Perhaps long enough to dis-integrate European democracy. But, on the whole, I do not think it likely. The time is very near when the European democracies will deal with their Communists as they ought to do: treat them as declared enemies of the state, proscribe their organisation and jail their leaders.

At a surprising speed, the issue is becoming clarified. The insane logic of the Soviet Bourbons drives them on to cleave the world in twain, with the probable consequence that Communism will be eradicated in the West. That cleavage, in itself, does not necessarily mean war: indeed its very clarity militates against war. Moreover, the condition is one

in which those of the satellite nations who are deeply attached to Western civilization—Czecho-Slovakia and Poland—will become a greater source of weakness to the East than France and Italy are, at present, to the West. The present sickeningly unstable equilibrium cannot last much longer. And I believe the odds are heavy that it will be resolved against Russia: on every issue vital to the real progress of the world she has been stubborn for retrogression, the votary of violence. Her destiny, I believe, is by the false unity of violence to compel the rest of the world to the true unity of peace and variety. J. MIDDLETON MURRY

Five Poems

STANLEY MASON

THE NEW RELIGION

Now to the new religion
Of saxophone and drum
Through the pale concrete twilight
The tranced votaries come.

Benevolent above them
In mystic galaxy
Look down from outer spaces
The neon nebulae,

And in the holy places
The subtle drums are beat;
The young god ebbs and surges
And urges in the feet:

Whose praise the ecstatic trumpet
Miraculously exudes;
Who shuffles through his faithful
In dark beatitudes.

In red religious darkness
The loins dissolve in song;
Beyond the verge of midnight
Pulsates the pallid throng.

What other god can soothe them
Who wake in furnished rooms
To tasteless, tardy luncheons
And alcoholic glooms?

Who after taxis, cocktails
And the bought love of Jews
At five o'clock some morning
Go out like a blown fuse.

NIGHT FALLS NOW

Night falls now on a foreign town,
The wind of time goes through my room,
The cold ghosts knock that once I loved,
One that in Europe's cloyed earth lies
(Dissolve the pearls that were his eyes),
Others more lost because they lived
And changing killed the things they were,
All have their feet upon the stair
And creaking timbers of the mind,
All come to brush the cobwebs by
And stare with vacant faces where
Dreams flutter in the evil wind.

Knock hands, tread feet, we prisoners all
Grope at our bars, glimpse, crane and call,
Pinned between seconds that must run
As planets round some darker sun,
Whose arbitrary motion wakes
The sense of laws that only seem,
The insidious logic of the dream
To crush the sphere inside the plane,
Dictate the pull of atoms or
The slower gravity of bone.

They come as shadows to my room,
Faint ghosts of one who still must range
Upon the roundabout of change
Until illusion cracks and falls
And sudden as the sea revealed
To travellers from hot mountain walls
Man sees the new dimension yield
Its vast and liberating dawn.
And on the wind of time takes wing.

THE NEW BIRDS

What are the fingers in the sky?
What scarecrow wailing drowns the dream?
Children when the moon is high
In darkened houses wake and scream.

O quiet mother in your bed,
It is the iron swan that sings,
It is the new and lovely birds
That startle midnight with their wings.

Above the hurt and huddling town
Their cruciate bodies jag the gloom,
True to their nightly tryst with man
Whose love is heavy in their womb.

On our inferno and their child
One by one they plant their kiss;
The chill clear eyes of dead girls hold
Their evil bird-like images.

O sweet crushed mother under stones,
Lift up your head and see them fly,
Whose wings are woven of your bones
And for whose love your children die.

HAMBURG

The ashes in the refuges
Attest their premature cremation,
And yet no shrieking gesture still
Proclaims a wordless indignation;
This harmless powder now contains
Not even the stiff accusing bones.

These people had their revelation.
The whirlwind licked their blood. Upon
The ghastly moment speared they then
Lived at the centre of the sun:
Until the taut nerves fused and down
The flesh ran from the molten bone.

Boys that girls loved were here at night.
The bonfire is the young man's pride.
Who screamed and shrivelled in these streets,
Raped by the fire before they died?
Girls that boys loved, whom now recalls
The less-than-human stain on walls.

Germany: October 1947 (I)

J. P. HOGAN

Cows moo in fields and village clocks tell the wrong time, here as elsewhere. And even at those stations of the Cross, Krefeld, Essen and Dortmund, people look much the same as people in Stepney or Wolverhampton. "In these places," wrote an American relief worker some time ago, "life goes on with a kind of blind drive."

What first appals the visitor is not the animate but the inanimate; not the children waving to the train at level crossings but the subsidiary tracks and sidings overgrown with grass and nettles; not the people on the platforms, but the stations themselves and the miles of derelict rolling stock, bombed locomotives and burned-out carriages; not, the people one glimpses clinging to the running boards of the little German trams and trailers, but the gigantic ruined townscape, the shattered factories standing as they stood on the morning after the raid, the panorama of smokeless factory chimneys. From the train which holds and feeds so comfortably the already well-fed administrators of the victor, the industrial belt from Krefeld to Dortmund seems like the macabre backcloth to a tragedy to which one has not the key. To find the key you have to probe beneath the surface, to penetrate the darkness and stench of the bunkers, strangle diffidence and good manners and thrust oneself into the miserable hovels, converted barracks and wooden huts where millions live and cook and sew and eat and sleep and die.

I left the train at Bad Oeynhausen, and spent the night at the British Red Cross Headquarters at Vlotho. Before going to bed I made a few notes, which ended: "But the things I want to write about are the

sunset behind Manningtree, the loveliness of the Stour estuary, and later the moon over the harbour. Years hence, when immediate concerns and preoccupations have lost their edge, shall I remember—sharply and precisely—the gradual unfolding of the shape of Holland's coast in the half-light between dawn and sunrise, and the opulence of that sunrise—the clouds that took the gold and gave it back to sea and land?"

The next morning I was driven along the autobahn, past the wooded hills of the Minden Gap, to Brunswick. Immediately after lunch a member of the Quaker Relief team took me out to some D.P. camps about ten miles to the south, near the great but now disused Hermann Goering Works. In the old U.N.R.R.A. days the Brunswick team looked after the welfare of a large camp of Polish D.P.s; but with the passing of U.N.R.R.A., their work and the work of all the voluntary societies suffered radical change. They found themselves suddenly a mere link in a chain of administration affecting ninety camps in the Brunswick area. Contacts with the displaced persons necessarily became impersonal rather than personal, intellectual rather than organic. The implications of the change might be good—might point to some solution, somewhere, somewhen, of the D.P. problem; but few relief workers do not regret the passing of the old order with its human warmth and variety of experience.

The thing that primarily troubled the D.P. teams I visited—here in Brunswick and later in Schleswig—was the closing down of the smaller camps as repatriation or emigration progressed. In Brunswick I was

too raw a visitor, and too pre-occupied with conditions of living as such, to grasp what this meant. Later, in Schleswig, in the course of a visit to a Latvian camp in Flensburg, I was able to see a concrete example of how camp closure worked. In one hut, or rather in one room of a hut, two families were living, divided as so often by a curtain. Both families consisted of women and children, as the menfolk had gone to England under the Westward Ho! emigration scheme. "So!" said the camp commandant who took us round. "Now please to tell me how you can close down some camps in order that all shall remain filled? Must we import new husbands for existing wives?"

That sums up the difficulties. Camp closure means that the emigration of the men will not even ease the cramped living conditions of the women left behind; on the contrary it will disrupt family life still more. It means that in that particular hut, for example, other women, not integral to the life of the women already there, will have to come and live. Or failing that, it means that the space now occupied by two families will have to be divided between three—and another curtain fixed up.

The displaced persons have suffered for years and are now at the end of their tether. Wherever I went I was told of the lowering morale in the camps as the best men went, one by one, for repatriation or emigration. The prospect of renewed upheavals as the smaller camps are closed brings gloom and consternation to those left behind—especially to the womenfolk, whose men, perhaps, have gone to England and who are still uncertain as to when they will be able to follow. Many D.P.s, moreover, seem unable to realise that the palmy U.N.R.R.A. days are over and that the voluntary societies find it hard to provide even the slenderest

supplies of food and clothing. I remember a Polish camp in Schleswig where the commandant and welfare officer talked for an hour of their miseries—of the increasing hostility of the Germans, and of the fact (terribly significant) that the people were even beginning to lose their faith and had almost ceased to go to Mass.

§

The first item on my Brunswick programme was a Hungarian camp. I had never been inside a D.P. camp before, but I had read so much about them that the squalor already seemed familiar: the bare boards, the brittle peeling paint, the ersatz glass in the windows which breaks at a touch and makes short work of any attempt to heat the place, and above all, the stench—which, in one degree or another, seems to pervade all Germany. It wasn't sweat, because everybody is painstakingly clean; it may have been inferior soap, rotten paint, rye bread, or tobacco hanging up to dry. I noted that the "schoolroom" in this camp contains no more than a half-dozen ricketty, broken desks and a blackboard—nothing else. A number of richly-coloured pictures adorned the altar of the "church," and the altar itself, as in any D.P. camp, was a noble attempt at ceremonial splendour.

Dreary as was this Hungarian camp, it was palatial compared with the Rumanian one we visited next. Here the squalor was incredible. Some of the Rumanians had escaped from Russia in nothing but the rags they stood up in. In one hut stretchers were being used as beds, and the "beds" covered with dried grass—not, mark you, brown straw, but green grass, ostensibly dried. I noted from my colleague's report some precise figures: those without beds, 141; without mattresses or straw sacks, 290; without blankets, 190; owning one blanket, 184. Floors were of stone, without

carpet, matting, or covering of any kind. Electric light had not been laid on, and candles are wholly unobtainable. Everybody has to go to "bed" at dusk and stay there till daylight. Stench appalling. The men make baskets—strong, serviceable ones. And it may be that they go into the woods to get fuel, though I doubt if all the huts had stoves, or if they dare begin to use their fuel yet, with the winter still ahead.

They took me into the kindergarten. Nine children of ages from two to eight stared at us and the older ones smiled. I thought of my two children at home. Even now, weeks after the event, it is hard to find the right words. To go from one hut to another, to open a door and close it a minute later with only the knowledge that the debit of the world's misery was steadily mounting—then suddenly to open one door and to see the faces of what, in Golders Green or Camden Town, would seem but the faces of nine very ordinary children, grubby little brats not specially notable or noticeable—here, in this squalor, it was to glimpse lilies in a cesspool, roses on a dunghheap; it was to see the Kingdom between the pressing of the latch and the squeaking of the hinges. Dostoevsky could have written about it; he could have given such men as Shatov or Kirillov the tongue, to speak of it with a minute particularity of tenderness which neither added to nor subtracted from the bright visior glimpsed from the doorway.

My companion had no sweets with her, but I happened to have a bar of chocolate—the ten-square kind, fortunately. She broke it into its ten little squares, gave one to each child and one to the teacher. "Danke schön . . . Danke schön . . . Auf wiedersehen . . . wiedersehen. . . ." I still hear those little voices in the middle of London streets and in the silence of London midnights.

It is horrible to be a charitymonger, but for once I did realise what *caritas* implied in an earlier world.

§

A bunker is a building of thick concrete, originally built as an air-raid shelter. At the end of the war these buildings naturally remained the airless, lightless retreats of the bombed-out. Time passed; and as the bombed-out fixed themselves up with friends or relatives in the town or elsewhere, or built themselves shacks and hovels on the city's rural fringe, their departure left space for the staging of one of Germany's greatest tragedies: the influx of millions of the rural populations of East Prussia, Silesia, and Pomerania—peasants, smallholders, small farmers and agricultural workers; now homeless and dispossessed—into the British zone. They are like the derelict rolling stock outside Essen; they are shunted into bunkers, converted barracks and camps in town and countryside, and there left and forgotten. They have little opportunity to supplement their meagre rations by going on the black market; and in the Ruhr and the industrial area around they have little opportunity of competing for a kind of work of which they have had no previous experience. Few of them, anyhow, are employable; the characteristic of any assembly of such refugees is that they consist in the main of old people, mothers and children. Young and middle-aged men, the traditional breadwinners, are still in Russia or the New Poland or missing altogether.

In a bunker in Brunswick I saw whole families living in rooms about four yards by three. One of their main difficulties is to find enough electric light bulbs, for there are no windows; and if a family manages to get a 100-watt bulb they do not dare to leave their room in case it vanishes and is replaced by a 25 watt. Most of the rooms I saw

were lit by no more than a 45 watt. Under this they have to cook, sew, mend, read and write. Schools in Germany are compelled to work in two shifts; and therefore, in the middle of the morning, many of the bunker children were at home, and I saw one little girl trying to do her homework under a light which could not have been more than 25 watt.

Originally the bunker housed 1,500 people. Now it is down to 300. Even so, it is desperately overcrowded; and the visitor, groping down dark corridors with the aid of a torch, is lucky if he escapes a sense of suffocation and claustrophobia. Only by the severest self-discipline was I able to attend to my kindly and indefatigable guide, and not desert him and rush in panic into the sunlit, rubble-flanked street below. What life here must have been like when 1,500 people lived in it defies one's most macabre imaginings. True, there is an apparatus to change the air, but it seems to do little to reduce the stench. To their eternal credit, the people manage to keep clean. One woman complained of a damp wall and bugs; but I heard no other complaints of vermin.

From the bunker we went to another refugee camp: a large public building with great draughty halls and corridors in a shocking state of dilapidation. Even the floors were marked DANGEROUS in several places. Once again the reality of the many photographs I had seen back in England suddenly materialised before me: the beds all round the room; men, women and children herded together; worldly possessions, the residue of a lifetime's accumulation, stacked on the beds; "wardrobes" hanging on clothes-lines stretched across the room. Thomas Hardy, if he could have been with me, would have been interested to learn that the next

building was occupied by the town's public health department.

We travelled southwards again in the direction of the Hermann Goering Works. We stopped on the way to eat sandwiches in the woods; the sun shone with summer heat and a few late flies and wasps droned lazily about my food and mouth. I thought of the Garden Suburb, the Euston Road and the diurnal rhythm of my normal life. The old dichotomy between love and duty, between what S. L. Bethell in *Shakespeare and the Popular Dramatic Tradition* calls the Egyptian principle and the Roman, presented itself yet again; and, as ever, I could not decide whether I best served God in implicit praise in my normal comings and goings, or in going out of my way, for conscience's sake, to do something I did not want to do.

I had not wanted to come out to Germany. I spoke no German, I was a poor hand at travelling, and I knew that I would be handicapped by my own temperament and inclinations. In the actual event this was proving only too true. Time and time again I had to drag my mind back from speculations which had nothing to do with the purpose of my visit and to force myself to stare at the condition of children's shoes. The endless succession of new faces in new places fascinated and bewildered; it was hard to resist the tide of so much new experience, or to try to reduce it to mere formulæ: so many refugees per square yard of camp space for instance. I found it far easier to remark the number of Germans who looked like Nietzsche, or marvel at the beauty and clarity of so many of the faces of the women and children.

§

The camp of White Ruthenian D.P.s proved to be by far the best I was to see anywhere in my travels. The place was well painted; there

were workshops of all kinds; and the "church" was amazingly beautiful. They had been lucky, I suppose, in getting the necessary salvage or scrap. Give almost any D.P. some material and he will surprise you by the result. They are blest with the versatility and adaptability of most "backward" races who have escaped the Nemesis of the conveyor belt and mass production. Seeing them at work in the carpenter's shop or toymaking or in the "engineering" works, I remembered the dictum of Ananda K. Coomaraswamy so often quoted by Eric Gill: "In the good society every man is a special kind of artist, not the artist a special kind of man." I felt that here, among these gentle, uprooted, resourceful people, I was much more in the presence of artists—artists in the scholastic, medieval sense of *art as habirus*—than on the Parnassian slopes of Hampstead or Montmartre.

To cross the road from the White Ruthenian camp to the Immendorf refugee camp is to go into a different world. Parts of the camp—the dentistry and dispensary, for example—seemed well equipped, and they, by contrast, emphasised the poverty and misery of the rest of the place, which told the all-too-familiar tale of bare boards, heaps of straw for "beds," or no beds at all. "Tragedy," I noted that night, not very lucidly, "may ennoble the protagonists and interest the spectators. But the same tragedy, repeated *ad infinitum*, degrades. The cumulative effect of the spectacle of human misery is one of boredom." I realised, then, that the authentic relief worker, actively engaged in doing something about the misery, is in different case. And I realise now, a month later (apparently back in London, but actually in a limbo between two worlds), that the word "impotence"

might have been truer than "boredom."

§

I lack space to describe the Quaker conference at Pivitsheide, at a hotel in the country about four miles out of Detmold on the fringe of the lovely Teutoburgerwald, or my subsequent stay with the Schleswig team in a countryside of little lakes and wooded shores—a sunless country, very like England with its hedges and misty mornings and opalescent skies, where I met Latvians and Poles and Yugoslavs and saw a representative sample of another German refugee camp. Before passing on to the Ruhr, however (which was the principal objective of my visit), I must note an incident which occurred on the way from Brunswick to Detmold.

We were travelling in the team's ambulance, with one of the back doors left open for air. The team leader drove and one of the girls sat with him at the front, leaving four of us inside. At one point we halted; and we could see, on the grass verge of the autobahn a dozen yards behind us, the two women who had hailed us. As they hurried towards us, struggling as well as they could with their heavy sacks, we suddenly saw, apparently springing from nowhere, four more figures: a middle-aged woman, a young man, two emaciated elderly men. All six of them were now struggling with their burdens towards the ambulance.

There were now ten people inside the ambulance, as well as a considerable weight of laden sacks and parcels. Some of the team objected, said that we had stopped to give a lift to two, not six, and called for the team leader to come round and see. He came round to the back and looked in on us. Our people protested loudly; but W., pipe in mouth, merely smiled and joked in German to the "hamsterers." W., I happen to know, is 49, but

his white hair makes him, at first glance, look older. Then, if you forget the white hair and look only at the light and serenity of his features, he looks younger than his years. I suppose, in our time, we have become so used to freaks and a universal Peter Pan mania, that we are puzzled when we see a real man.

"Hamstern" means to hoard; but in Germany to-day it means merely to go into the countryside and scrounge from the farms whatever can be scrounged to keep body and soul together. Strictly speaking, it is illegal; but who shall speak strictly in a land where everybody is undernourished, and starvation waits round the next corner? Virtually everybody goes hamsterning, and everybody knows everybody else does. Even the schools have hamsterning holidays: Saturdays off so that the children can help scrounge. Strictly speaking, W. should have pressed his foot on the accelerator and obeyed the Roman principle; in point of fact he applied the brake and was true to the Egyptian principle—which, as Bethell points out, happens also to be the Christian one.

Morality and law may be wholly admirable as the guiding principles of our normality. But in extremity, in the sharp reality when we must choose between ethics and religion, between the laws of men and the love of God, laws and ethics must go hang and love triumph. So, as I say, W. ignored my companions' protests and laughed with the Germans—the vanquished and hungry and lawless. I loved him for it—though I hasten to admit, in fairness to my companions, that the added load was rough on the ambulance.

We resumed our journey jammed tight together with sacks all over the place. The girl on my right began to undo her sack; it was well

tied and she had a long struggle. Eventually she opened it and produced a handful of fine big pears. My mouth watered, but I hung back to see what the others would do. They refused—so I did likewise. My mouth dried up again, and the girl put the pears back in the sack. Her cheeks burned.

Most of us—blast our self-righteousness—find it easier to give than receive. At the time, I was indignant with my companions, but as I look back, I can see their point. We go to Germany—or Poland or elsewhere—to give, not to receive. On (I think) pages 4 and 5 of *Germany Revisited*, Gollancz writes tellingly about pears. He met a woman in Düsseldorf whose husband was in a T.B. sanatorium. The man craved for fresh juicy fruit, and the woman had bought five hard green pears at a cost she could ill afford. They were on the table when Gollancz visited her. Suddenly her child, or one of her children, rushed into the room, saw the pears, grabbed one and bit it. You must have a heart of triple brass not to be moved by Gollancz's description of the anguish on the woman's face at that moment, her terrible division between the want of her husband and the no less real want of her child.

Relief workers meet such cases daily. They know about women with husbands in sanatoria, about pears and children. In principle they were right to refuse; in point of fact, in this instance, they were wrong.

After a decent interval I handed round cigarettes. The value of the cigarette on the black market has fallen considerably; it is now worth no more than about three shillings. In the course of my tour I offered cigarettes to many Germans and D.P.s, and only once did a recipient "prefer to smoke it later." D.P. camp commandants, leaders of refugee camps, Germans in their

homes—invariably they accepted with perfect courtesy and smoked the cigarette *in my presence*, even though the temptation to hoard it and sell it for food must have been great.

But the girl with the pears refused. She snapped at me in German—presumably to the effect that she didn't smoke. I didn't believe her. Then one of my companions pulled out his wallet and began to show us photographs of his wife and family. Gradually the photographs got round to the Germans. The tension eased. Before the sheer miracle that men and women, whether in Kent or Westphalia, marry and beget

children, all of us were humbled. Barriers dissolved. We began to breathe freely.

I offered the girl another cigarette—and this time believed she didn't smoke. She opened her sack again and gave us pears. No, we may even have asked for them, humbly and tenderly—I forget. Certainly we ate and enjoyed: they were as the Bread and Wine.

Our passengers wanted to get to Bielefeld or even Dortmund, and we had to put them down before turning off the autobahn for Detmold. We parted in amity and communion; and the memory of them is still in my heart.

(to be concluded)

Toward Bethlehem

C. BUSBY SMITH

It is so far, Mary said. Oh how many hundred miles have we laboured, arguing over and over, it is too far? The child with its low wail is angry and eager for life. Oh if it knew what a death this life is it might turn back even now in a miraculous retraction and unbind us from the stark terror; the dull ache of this journey. If we had asked to be blessed thus I should say "We will find a birthplace though a sea burst out before us," but, as it is, surely some village we passed would have sufficed? We could have rested there. One more sin; Joseph, on your head would not count much in the long run; you've sinned enough already.

So the long trek went on; always the storm hung over their heads; the petty bickering that broke out at every turn in the road frayed the narrow rope of reason and good will. At last they separated and tramped in merciful silence, sullenly apart; with Mary weeping under the too fierce sun.

Toward evening of a day they came to a place. The story is well known how, beaten at last, they crawled into a stable, and slept among the straw; after all the pain there was nothing to ease the agony or bring a little joy to their side. Joseph, bitter at first, found comfort after the birth.

The miracle flowering under his eyes warmed his chilled heart.
And Mary? Well perhaps the delirium, the hot fever
that wracked and twisted her face to an old woman's face,
opened a little door hidden at the back of the mind,
and let a little happiness creep in
with a sound of angels singing, and a glimpse of God.

Belle Isle

VERNON SCANNELL

These are the beautiful inhabitants
Of the beautiful isle, travelling
In carriages beautifully lit,
Dazing pedestrian, night-entangled eyes;
Travelling homeward with music on their lips.

Theirs is the song of steel with iron words
Carved in two-inch type and plagiarised
From the latest copy of the *News of The World*.
This, their poetry, this, their song:

The lady white beneath the lamp;
The satyr lurking in the door;
The gilded palaces where romp
The tramps and chorus girls for sport.
Eleven Apollos rolling in the mud,
Desire the golden ball,
And forty negros beat their drums
Throughout the glittering hall.
Silver and blue and the huge
Improbability of love
Stretched across the sky,
"Stars and the moon I love above,
The same old moon and you."

But not this moon, the slenderest paring
Of lime poised with infinite stillness
Above the silent chimney-stack
Where no small stars dare tinkle.
These small, warm, certain
Houses huddling, cuddling
Together defying
The too real terrors of the night.
The brilliant carriage, stamping, clanging,
Brings in triumph the beautiful people,
The beautiful blind people,
Their song, their poetry;
And shall we say that they're mistaken,
Singing of love in their beautiful island.

Two London Saints

RUTH COLLINS

A few years before the war I happened to have a good deal to do with a Mission which lay in a near-slum not far from the centre of London. The district, one of tall tenements, was self-respecting, but only just. Always poverty hovered, awaiting its chance. The congregations at the Sunday services wore mended best clothes as pathetic as rags and the washed cotton frocks of the children often covered undernourished bodies. The street which housed the mission was mean and sunless: the traffic on the nearest main road reached it as a muffled roar. The mission itself was a functional building dating from the eighteen-sixties. It must always have seemed unpretentious; now it was insignificant. Here lived Mr. Smith the missionary and his wife, "Sister" as she was always called.

I do not think the Smiths had ever been in love; they married, as they would acknowledge, because together they could carry on the Lord's work efficiently. It was not much of a marriage in the usual sense; very little domestic life, no endearments, no children. But a feeling they did have of partnership in a vocation. It was an unequal partnership. Mr. Smith was, as missionary, a despot in a small way, answerable to only his conscience and a committee; Sister merely his assistant, the one to do the menial jobs, go round in his wake and mop up after him. He meant well but he was tactless; he had no notion how to mask his inflexibility. He dwelt too much on Hell and Judgment and his austerity intimidated people into avoiding him. Sister, with her mild face and innocent instinct to gild the pill, restored a balance. She considered herself inferior to her husband, not

only in intellect and education (as she was) but by reason of her sex. It was forbidden to her ever to reach the heights, I mean to preach at a Sunday service. The Bible, for each word of which the Smiths assumed a direct inspiration from God, frowned on women preachers. On Sundays therefore she sat with the rest of the congregation, her hands folded in her lap idle for once, listening uncritically, sure that Mr. Smith's words were God's words, drinking it all in with gratitude, experiencing (as she often told us) a renewal of faith and strength.

Besides being the missionary, Mr. Smith mattered because he was a man. His sex more than his status caused the women to be aware of themselves when he entered and to compete for his notice. There were few men at the mission, too few to do the heavy work, keep order among the boys and marry the women helpers. Women were everywhere, nearly all unmarried or widows, and often deformed or not quite right in the head.

Sister and her husband lived as it were on a small island which was gradually being washed away by strong tides. Perhaps one day their island would disappear. Did this trouble them? Little, I think. The multiplicity of things to be done left no leisure for forebodings. They were on the Lord's work, under orders, and like soldiers at the front they found it sufficient to concentrate on the immediate job. If for an instant either paused to dream, it was of a Voice saying "Well done, thou good and faithful servant!" not of a London brought to its knees. So far ahead was not their business to look.

Their world was full of enemies,

or rather of one enemy with countless manifestations: The enemy was the Devil. The existence of a personal Devil was as evident as the existence of a personal God. Wherever he shewed himself the Devil must be engaged promptly and without concessions. The Smiths were in arms against a great number of things; not only against crime, sexual immorality, personal selfishness; against theatres, cinemas, smoking, dancing, cards and so on; but against the Church of Rome, most of the Church of England, a number of the nonconformist denominations; against politics, psychology, a scientific attitude; all the forms of thought and analysis they lumped together and condemned as Modernism or Materialism.

These high standards of personal behaviour involved a great amount of drawing the line as to what was and was not permissible to the individual Christian, a sensitive awareness of guilt, a constant searching of one's heart. Results were sometimes quaint. For instance, it was thought wrong to buy and sell on the Sabbath, but on that day the workers had a communal tea to which they were expected to contribute sixpence each. We squared our consciences by dropping the sixpences as it were inadvertently into an obsolete missionary-box which was there-upon treated as non-existent until Monday. Sister would not cook on a Sunday because this was work in a worldly sense and involved the work of other people; she would however light the gas to boil water for tea and she would use electric light. She approved of physical training for her Life Brigade girls and condemned dancing, even country dancing. The problem was to determine where a drill step ended and a dance step began. This

was a serious matter to be gone into carefully.

No wonder then that there was a hemmed-in look in Sister's faded eye, that she had a wary, almost a suspicious approach to every situation, a readiness to shy off at the first scent of sin. But the chief reason for her being at bay was simply that she had too much to do. Her eyes could not rest on you for long; they were ahead at the next task and the one beyond. Her smile soon became impersonal. Ask her purpose in life and she would reply it was the salvation of the individual soul: yet, poor soul, she had little enough time to spare for you and seldom an undivided attention.

I had guessed her age to be about sixty-five: in fact, she was not much over fifty. She was broken down by years of overwork and bad diet, her legs swollen, heart in goodness knows how rocky a state. People said she once had a lovely voice. That was ruined too, by speaking in the open air, often against interruptions, by always having to lead the singing, by having to talk for hours on end. She was merciless to herself; would not defer to bodily weakness; ignored the warnings of doctors. The Lord's work would not wait. It must have been thirty years since she had considered her own likings and aptitudes. If she had clothes other than her navy blue uniforms I never saw them. I don't think she owned anything pretty, anything which could be coveted. She was just Sister who did things for one, heard complaints, cheered and advised. Her face was habitually red and moist with exertion: habitually, too, she beamed. There was a steady radiance about her. Of ill temper, of depression, of even a momentary slackening of control, I never saw any sign.

Endlessly duty succeeded duty. She shrank from nothing on

account of it being tiring or dirty or harrowing. She visited the bed-ridden, the dying; washed their bodies, soothed their minds. She pleaded with the hardened, interceded, broke bad news, comforted the bereaved. She had to visit prisons and mortuaries. She addressed countless meetings and, in accordance with her code, the addresses she gave had to be entirely her own work. In between all this somehow or other she kept her comfortless living quarters more or less clean and after a fashion cooked for her husband and herself. It may be imagined they could afford no domestic help. Lack of money hampered every enterprise at the mission. There was insufficient to keep the place in repair or renew its out-of-date equipment, let alone pay the missionary and his wife a living wage. I often wondered what was going to happen to the Smiths when they were no longer able to work. They were not concerned for themselves. The Lord would provide.

Sunday was the crown of their week and the climax of Sunday was the evening service. Mr. Smith, entangled so much in affairs, would have liked to be an evangelist all the time. During six days weekly he could not avoid what he deemed irrelevancies: now he might for a little while fulfil himself, offering to the humble the hope of eternal life and reminding the stiff-necked of the chance of damnation. His sermon was the result of much work and prayer, much agonised wrestling with himself. Before the service the helpers met in an ante-room and prayed long and fervently for the blessing of God upon their endeavours. Much emphasis was placed on personal deficiencies which might stand in the way of successful witness. I used to imagine I felt the whole energies of the mission begin slowly

to gather themselves together and prepare to concentrate. So taut was the atmosphere that I was surprised on entering the chapel by the expression of placid imperiousness on most of the faces there. The chapel was never more than a third full.

We sang Sankey's hymns with a kind of hollow heartiness, and choruses set to music hall tunes whose vitality set our feet tapping. There were long extempore prayers by Mr. Smith with "Praise the Lords" loyally interjected by Sister. Then Mr. Smith preached. He would begin in a matter of fact voice and a pedestrian tempo. Bit by bit he heightened pace and intensity, working up to a series of climaxes when he would weep and scream. Now the fanatic was unleashed. His main appeal was to fear. He knew precisely how to get under the skin of one's misgivings. Always there was the hint of everlasting punishment. He could create an almost intolerable tension by silence after an outburst. How far his method was deliberate, how far unconscious, I was not able to judge; but I recognized his timing as first rate. Invariably he wound up with a plea for converts. Here I used to look at the expressionless faces about me, myself puzzled beyond expression. For Mr. Smith spoke as though faith were a straightforward matter of making up one's mind on a question of fact. The Lord's arms were open to receive the sinner. Would anyone come forward and confess Him? Mr. Smith waited, spent now and withdrawn. In the stillness Sister murmured to herself. Would anyone come forward?

In all the dozens of times I attended these services no one did. The one thing the Smiths really craved was withheld from them. There must have been some converts in the past or there would be no helpers. Most of these however

were elderly or imported from outside: most, too, seemed in an imperfect state of grace for they were constantly falling out with each other. The Sunday School children were a press gang despatched to the mission by parents who wanted afternoon naps. As they grew older they openly looked forward to their fourteenth birthdays when they would grow up in a day. Then the mission would see them no more. Being let down was one of the things the Smiths had learned to take for granted. Mr. Smith would accept the trial in a spirit of what looked like gloomy satisfaction at a further demonstration of the Devil's efficiency. Sister, whom nothing could embitter, would take it to the Lord in prayer and bob up again ready for the next rebuff.

There were the reckless Smiths then, squandering themselves on a neighbourhood which went on with its unsatisfying life and would have nothing to do with their gospel. I do not mean that they were not here and there regarded with respect or even affection: they were, but for inessential qualities only; at least the Smiths thought them inessential. People would take all they could get in the way of material assistance and be grateful or not as their dispositions determined, but it did not occur to them to accept, even to consider, the Smiths' dogma or their way of life.

One cannot wonder at the failure. The Smiths would not plan. Thinking goodwill was enough, they would not reinforce it with technique. Bullheaded they went at it, seeking to change the individual. The mission was dreary within and without. It was not merely a question of shabbiness; there was a depressing dearth of talent. The singers could not really sing, the pianists could not play. The

Sunday School teachers had no notion how to present things to children or anyone else. Amateurishness abounded. Nothing was made attractive or entertaining because that would have meant a compromise with the World. There was an ever-present fear that people might find amusement at the mission and lose the gospel. You must not think you came there for fun. Indeed you could not.

By their sincerity the Smiths defied laughter and contempt. From any usual point of view their life was ghastly, a kind of voluntary martyrdom which had not even the satisfaction of effecting anything appreciable. I could not enter into their minds however much I tried. They were my enemies because they wanted to get rid of graciousness and beauty and the art of living and would have rendered life uniformly unbearable. They believed in guilt and fear and their God was a wicked one. I would not have their world at any price. They did right to mistrust me. But their selflessness is another matter; it never faltered. In their way they were, I think, saints, both of them. And Sister at least was happy often luminous with joy. They baffle me.

I have not revisited the mission since the war and do not know whether it yet stands. The district was heavily bombed. I can imagine the Smiths during the blitz, personally fearless and compelled for once to forget about dogma and drawing the line. After all they were at their best when they had simple practical things to do for people. Perhaps they died in the Blitz; if so, they did well, for they were survivals of a way of thought which was always unreal and their day is done. I am glad it is; but you could not help loving Sister. I often think of her fighting her losing battle for ugliness and doing it so beautifully.

Four Poems

J. T. BROCKWAY

THE GIRL ON THE TRAM

Fresh bud of beauty, bending
Your head in shy suspense,
And to our darkness lending
A vernal innocence,
Two pairs of eyes ensnaring
Within a trance like wine,
That gaze with timid daring—
Jantje's eyes . . . and mine.

You little dream your smiling
Shall haunt his boyhood's dreams,
Shall gild the glance beguiling
Of legendary queens:
Your laugh be Helen's laughter,
Your hair, the Lorelei's,
And ruined Cleopatra
Face Death with your bright eyes.

THE DEAD CHILD

(Translated from the Dutch of A. Roland Holst)

The mother sings:
Tonight came Sleep, who swept aside
The cloud of my despair,
Until I woke, as Time lay still,
And found his corner bare,
And heard his voice 'twixt moon and snow,
But could not find him there.

He sang: and, oh, I thought he stood
And watched me in my room,
And I was lost in light and could
Not understand his tune;
I only knew my darling stood
And sang 'twixt snow and moon.

So high, so light, so gay, his song,
I must no longer cry
For him, my bird, who never saw
The years grow cold and die.
But, oh, that my gift of love he spurned,
Deep in the grave should lie!

My gift of love . . . Oh, no, for he
Sent me, oh, wonderful!
A petal from a rose that smiles
Outside the Prince's hall:
To show his love, who waits for me
Far, far, beyond my call.

THE GARDEN

If we could capture the moment,
Here, now, where the garden is still,
And the birds are asleep in the branches,
As deep as the slumbering will,
Where desire and ambition fall from me,
The voice of the traffic dies,
Then, then, my love, could I answer
The look in your desperate eyes.

But swift, in a shaft of sunlight,
The birds shrill out of the trees,
And the shadowing flight of the blackbird
Awakens the old unease,
And fills the heart with longing,
Stirs up the deep wound's pain,
And you, my darling, my heart and my life,
Have touched my hand in vain.

THE PROWLING BEAST

The apple tree is showering
White magic on the ground,
The gay laburnum flowering,
In beaded sunlight gowned,

The almond shyly flushes,
In the hedge, the hawthorn blushes,
Hid in the leaves, the thrushes
Praise the creating hand,

That scorned and unrewarded,
Since ages unrecorded,
Pours what the winter hoarded
Riotous over the land.

Whilst where the beast is prowling,
Chained to a caravan,
A beaten dog lies howling
The praise of the hand of man.

Coal

I.F.G.

No beast was calling there. No bird
Was singing in the jungle peace.
Only the sun on tree and tree
Spread low its golden fleece.

No bird, no beast! Only the winds
More violent raged through tree and tree:
Wider the fawcets of the rains
Opened relentlessly.

As a tree fell the forest foamed
And green the spray: and so it lies
In a green light beneath green seas,
While the last echo dies.

In shadowed peace the chemistry
Of dissolution works its change,
Age after age as sun and wind
And rain through forests range.

It was the very pit of night:
No moon surely no stars were there.
Down the dark aisles the trees uphold
A breathless roof of air.

The streams grew big and filled the land
Souring the dark and fertile mould,
Engulphed the Ararat of trees,
Deeper the waters rolled.

Now drowned the jungle rose and fell
Riding the earth's uneasy motion.
Now deep now shallow o'er it flows
The tide of land and ocean.

Hid in the dark and urgent womb
The forests shrink and bear a strain
Such as raised silent Alps to tower
Above the Lombard plain.

Here in a coal is sun forgot
Ere any bird sought any tree.
But why is made this miracle
And why this husbandry?

The Conservatism of N. S. Leskov

D. A. DAVIE

Leskov's reputation, in Russia as well as abroad, has grown more slowly than that of some of his compatriots and contemporaries. And that slowness, we are told, is to be explained, at least in part, by the unpopularity of his political conservatism. In England almost as much as in Russia the normal reader has been so conditioned that he cannot conceive of conservatism under the Tsarist regime as in any way a respectable political attitude. And there is, therefore, every reason why the reader who is attracted by Leskov should be inclined to explain away that awkward eccentricity in his author by seeing him as a naïve, an unconscious, a "spontaneous" genius. This view of Leskov can seem to be substantiated by his picaresque form, and by his "style," as that appears in translation. After all the English reader has been used to adopting much the same expedient in the case of certain of his own authors, of some English novelists, for instance, in whom an apparent lack of intelligence can be explained away in terms of their abundance of external "life," and of some poets, who are to be seen as "inspired"—"Blake had no technique." Yet to anyone who believes that art is the product of unusual control, unusual equilibrium, not of an undisciplined *élan*, Blake's own and contrary judgment must be the first assumption of criticism:

I have heard many People say, "Give me the Ideas. It is no matter what Words you put them into," and others say, "Give me the Design, it is no matter for the Execution." These People know Enough of Artifice, but Nothing of Art. Ideas cannot be Given but in their minutely Appropriate Words, nor Can a Design be made without its minutely Appropriate Execution.

Where the ideas are worthless,

the form must be worthless also. In the case of Leskov, therefore, it is necessary to argue that his conservatism is not the conservatism of *Waverley* or of *Les Chouans*, not a prejudice which the writer intends, but is unable, to rationalize, but the conservatism of Coleridge, of Arnold, the expression of a whole and consistent attitude to life.

This distinction, which I suppose untenable, between the conscious artist and the spontaneous genius, is too often allowed enormous play in considering Russian literature. Pushkin and Turgenev, we are to understand, are the artists. Gogol, Dostoievsky, Leskov, on the other hand, we are invited to see as childlike, inspired, in whom much must be discounted, much forgiven, for the sake of the greatness which, in spite of themselves, they could not help but show. Such a judgment can only be invalidated, in each case, by a detailed drawing-out of the complex organisation of a particular work. In the case of Gogol, for example, *Dead Souls* could be such a document. There the examination would start with an insistence that the novel, as it stands, is a fragment, and that so much as survives of Book II serves to demonstrate that the oddities of Book I, the only completed portion, were deliberately used in the interest of a total organisation, and not the inescapable result of oddities in Gogol's vision. The point is not that Gogol was a neurotic, even perhaps a pathological case, but that such of his work as is valuable was the product, not of his malady, but of states of unusual mental health.

The distinction between the conscious and the naïve vision is more often assumed than stated:

Both Leskov and Turgenev used what is now considered the old-fashioned device of setting a story within a story. The Baron puts down his glass after dinner and is reminded of an extraordinary man or woman he met years before. Or he retells something he heard when he was a student, or when he was out shooting. Now in Turgenev the convention is graceful, because we feel that he has invented the setting. There never was such a Baron with his glass of wine, nor such a student. The device convinces because it is an artifice. In Leskov one has no similar illusion. We feel that his beginnings, his containing stories, are muddled up with real life and, by the great paradox of art, they are distracting and unconvincing just because they are probably true.*

"The device convinces because it is an artifice"? Hardly; a paradox was in the offing, and Mr. Pritchett could not let it go. Hardly "convinces"; rather "attracts." The reader of *A Lear of the Steppes* is pleased by the first page, as he is pleased by the nest of boxes of the curio-maker, by the smoothness, the meticulousness, the very uselessness. And the first pages of *The Enchanted Pilgrim* are less smooth, less meticulous, precisely because the device is not useless, but essential to the meaning of the whole.

In what way the device of "the story within a story" is essential to Leskov's purpose can best be realised through the consideration of another of Mr. Pritchett's observations in the same essay: "Leskov seems to have a more genuinely religious nature than 'the great sinner' . . ." (Page 260.)

Here, indeed, one would say, lies his importance, as the only profoundly religious writer among the Russian novelists. It should be clear that no paradox is involved. Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, for example, are profoundly concerned with religious experience, precisely as that experience is most widely recognised in the Protestant West, as the agonised turnings of the private

soul. We are only beginning to realise that this is only one aspect of the religious experience, and that the communal, the anthropological aspect, expressed in myth which is more than personal symbol, is to be combined with the private agonie if the latter are to be fruitful. It is as expressing the Russian version of Christianity, in its anthropological aspect, that Leskov is important. And if Leskov's importance is seen in these terms, it becomes clear that the Enchanted Wanderer could be described as a Russian Orestes; that is to say, a the individual chosen by destiny for spiritual exploration, and seen in relation to the community and the tradition from which his destiny has compelled him to "wander." He was "promised" to God, before birth. He experiences visions instructing him that he is to undergo tribulation for the sake of a ultimate enlightenment. And he returns to prophesy. Necessarily therefore, that community from which he is, by his destiny, compelled to roam, yet to which he is by his destiny, with unusual closeness bound, is to be represented in his tale. And so, precisely as the modern Orestes is presented at the moment of *The Family Reunion* precisely as the Ancient Mariner returns to importune, not another wanderer, but (most significantly) wedding-guest, so Golovan, the wanderer, must tell his tale to a group of Russian bourgeois aboard a river-boat. That the conversation which he interrupts should begin with exile and proceed to suicide in exile, that his first anecdote, about the Moscow priest, should be concerned with a scapegoat ("Let him go! He alone prays for us!"), that in his second, his talent for horse-coping should be represented as a natural gift and an incommunicable secret, that his interrogator should be, on the one hand, "philosopher," on the other,

*V. S. Pritchett: *The Living Novel* (Chatto and Windus) pp. 256-7.

merchant—all these characteristics of the story within a story are seen to be not capricious, but deliberate and essential. Orestes is considered at the moment of his reunion with the community.

If this were all, it would be no great matter, and would establish no reason why Leskov should be read to-day. Coleridge and Mr. Eliot illuminate the relationship which exists, ideally or in fact, between Orestes and the community. In other words they illuminate the modes and the conditions of the spiritual life of the community. And it seems at first that Golovan does little within the frame of the Orestes myth. Golovan may be both derivative and sentimental. He can be called derivative on two counts. He is, in the first place, the "saintly fool" of Russian literature, who appeared in the life of the period as the *yurodivy*, the peasant pilgrim, half charlatan, half apostle, and in the literature as Tolstoy's Alesha Gorshok, Dostoevsky's Myshkin, and Leskov's own "Musk-ox." He is, in the second place, "the great sinner," sinning his way to God through orgies of drunken debauchery and debauched penitence, again a social phenomenon (see Leskov's anecdote of "The Devil-chase"), and again recurrent in the literature as Dmitri Karamazov; or the hero of Tolstoy's *Resurrection*, or Garshin's *Russian Soul*. It is not sufficiently realised by English readers that both these figures could be sentimentalized, and that the Russians were alive to that danger. Dostoevsky, in *The Possessed*, and Ostrovsky, in *Even a Wise Man Stumbles*, satirized the *yurodivy*, and even Tolstoy is hesitant about the indiscriminate charity of Princess Mary, in *War and Peace*. Obviously the charge of sentimentality cannot be preferred whenever these figures appear, but

must depend upon the use to which they are put, the honesty with which they are seen.

And at first Leskov may no seem to bear examination very well:

It was an autumn day, dry, the sun shone, but it was cold and the wind raised clouds of dust and yellow leaves were tossed about in it. I did not know what hour of the day it was or what place it was or where the road led to and there was a horrid emptiness in my soul: not an inkling of an idea what I had to do. All I was thinking about was that poor Grusha's soul was doomed now and that it was my duty to suffer for her and to save her from everlasting hell. But how I was to do it, I didn't know and that filled my mind with distress and anguish, but suddenly something touched me on the shoulder: I looked up and saw that it was a dead twig that had fallen from the willow-tree and was being carried far away by the wind, and I followed it with my eyes and then suddenly I saw Grusha walking, only she was very small and looked no more than six or seven years old, and behind her shoulders there sprouted little wings.*

When all allowances for the fact of translation have been made, one is still inclined to endorse Mr. Pritchett's verdict—"a Dostoevsky without the epileptic fits," without, that is, the insight into internal dialogue. Lewdness and brutality are not for Leskov incompatible with religious feeling, and perhaps he invites, through the wanderer's fantastic adventures, only what Mr. Pritchett seems to invite for him, a crushing out against the reader's palate of the exquisite, the compressed and piquant "Russianism" of his tale. If that were so, one would have to say that we can no longer afford such luxuries, and to leave one's reading of Leskov there.

But in fact Leskov provides his own criticism of what he offers for approval. His own acceptance, we see, is far from being too ready; too blind, or easily dishonest. One of

**The Enchanted Pilgrim and Other Tales*: translated by David Magarshack. Hutchinson 1946. p.116.

the themes, I have said, is of the sinner as scapegoat. But that theme is at its most explicit in the uproarious chapter XI:

"It is right that I should endure this cross and that it shouldn't fall upon anyone else's shoulders, for I," said he, "am a man of good family and I have received an excellent education, so that I could say my prayers in French when I was a little boy, but I was very unkind and I inflicted all sorts of torture on people, lost my serfs at cards, separated mothers from their children, married a rich woman and made life so unbearable to her that she soon died and finally, being myself the cause of all my troubles, I even murmured against God for having given me such a nature. And that's why he has punished me and given me a different nature, so that I haven't got a vestige of pride left in me: spit in my eyes or slap my face and I don't mind so long as I can get drunk and forget all about myself."

"And now," I said, "don't you ever murmur against Him for giving you such a character?"

"I do not," he replied, "for although it is worse, yet it is better."

"What do you mean?" I asked. "I don't know what you're talking about: it's worse, yet it's better!"

"That's quite simple," he replied.

"For, you see, now I only know one thing and that is that I'm destroying myself, but at least I can no longer destroy others, for everybody turns away from me. I," said he, "am now like unto Job smitten with sore boils and therein," he said, "lies my happiness and my salvation," and with these words he drank up the last glass of vodka and asked for another decanter, saying:

"And you, my dear friend, remember: never scorn any man, for nobody can tell the reason why a man is tormented by any desire, nor why he suffers. We, the possessed, suffer these things so that it shall be easier for the rest. And if you yourself be afflicted by some desire, do not wilfully abandon it lest another man pick it up and be tormented, but rather look for a man who would be willing to take upon himself this wickedness of yours."*

Nowhere I think in Dostoevsky may one find so plain and compressed an exposition of what could be regarded as the typically Dostoevskian themes. And Leskov puts it all in the mouth of a

drunkard, who uses these sentiments to drink at Golovan's expense, and, having made him drunk, to lead him to lose his money at a gipsy restaurant. The implication is obvious. And the treatment of "the great sinner" is no less caustic:

"... I know very well, sir, that hanging is too good for a villain like me!"

He, however, replied:

"But, my dear fellow, what could you do about it if you are an artist?"

"How do you mean, sir?" I said.

"I mean what I say," he replied, "my dear Ivan Severyanynch, my semi-honourable one—an artist."

"I'm afraid, sir," I said, "I don't understand."

"Don't think it is anything bad," he said, "for I too, am an artist."

"Well," I thought to myself, "I can see that all right: it isn't only I who drank myself into delirium tremens!"*

Where an author can to this degree be critical of that which he offers as his own moral positive, the reader can feel confident in allowing full weight to those passages in which the offer is made:

"Well, good-bye, sir," I said, "and thank you very much for your kind reward, but I'm afraid there's something else that must be settled."

"What's that?" he asked.

"It's this, sir," I said, "I feel guilty before you for having had a fight with you and for having been disrespectful to you."

He laughed and said:

"Oh, that's nothing. I like you: you're a nice chap!"

"No, sir," I replied, "that has nothing to do with my being a nice chap. It can't be left like that, for it would always remain as a blot on my conscience. You're a defender of our country and I dare say the Emperor himself addresses you as 'sir.'"

"That's true enough," he said.

"When we get our commission we receive a paper on which it is written, 'Sir, we confer upon you the rank of officer and we command our people to respect and honour you.'"

"Well, you see, sir," I said, "you can hardly expect me to forgive myself for having inflicted such a dishonour on you."†

*Op. cit., p. 95.

†Op. cit., pp. 36-7.

The value attached by Golovan to the Tsar's commission is to be taken, for the moment, at its face-value. (Later, as will be seen, it is to be examined and justified.) That there is no satirical intention here will be plain from the tone of the original. The reader of the translation should consider also the place of this episode in the developing rhythm of the religious theme. Golovan here is still on the horns of the Orestean dilemma, the riddle of the Sphinx, to which no right solution is possible; having decided the riddle (he can only decide wrongly), he will be driven out to tribulation; his enlightenment will be complete when he undertakes atonement; and, purified, he will return to prophesy. These four stages are represented in Leskov's story, thus: the period of the dilemma embraces the birth of Golovan, his early years, his inadvertent killing of the monk (significantly a sanctified person), the accident with the horses (in which, incidentally, it is not plain whether or not his father perishes), the mutilation of the cat, the theft of his master's horses, and his employment as a nurse; the tribulation embraces his exile with the Tartars, his employment with the prince, and his orgy in the gipsy restaurant; the atonement embraces his sacrifice of Grusha, his Army service in the Caucasus, and his employment in the theatre; the gift of prophecy follows his entry into the monastery, only when the inadvertent and symbolical sacrifice of a cow has completed his purification in the waters of the Caucasian river.

It will be argued that it is fantastic to allow such weight where the tone throughout is brutally comic. But, Leskov's method is the method of the Russian *skaz*, and to suppose the comic incompatible with a religious preoccupation is to introduce irrelevancies from the polite comedy of

the West. One should bear in mind, rather, the Greek satyr-plays, the mediæval English moralities, or the bawdy rites of West Indian voodoo to-day. In any case, the symbolic overtones assert themselves far too insistently and far too consistently, to be ignored. The prodigious birth (the infant has a phenomenally large head), the murder of the monk (the anointed), the visions, the three sacrifices (of the cat, of Grusha, of the cow), the purification in the river, Golovan's role of Satan on the stage in St. Petersburg, the prophecy in the pit—these symbols are ordered, and mutually strengthening in a complex pattern; and the insult to the Tsar's uniform must be allowed to stand with them, its significance to be taken up and clarified later. Consider, for instance, the episode upon which the insult to the Tsar's uniform depends. Golovan has been employed by a Polish gentleman (his race, like that of the Englishman, Raleigh, of the Tartars, and of the gipsy, Grusha, is important), to look after his child. The child's mother, who has deserted the unworthy father, implores Golovan to surrender the child to her, and he, after inward debate, does as she wishes. The dilemma here (accompanied, as it is, by a vision) has all the qualities of the insoluble riddle which confronts Orestes in the *Choephoree*, or the Sophoclean Oedipus. Either Golovan betrays his trust to his master, or he denies the rights of blood. In either case, he must do wrong. And his decision precipitates, as for Orestes, the wanderings and the tribulation.

§

The tribulation starts with the magnificent account of the duel with whips. The effect here is extremely complex. Golovan, in the first place, is the representative of Holy Russia against the heathen Tartars. He is, in the second place; the scapegoat, taking upon himself

not only the cause of his master for whom he fights (that master being the officer whose uniform he has dishonoured), but also, touching a deeper level, the guilt of his compatriots. For when his opponent dies in the duel, only the Tartars save him from Russian justice:

"What do you want? What are you getting so worked up about?"

"What do you mean?" they said.

"You killed an Asiatic, didn't you?"

"So what if I did kill him? Wasn't it done according to the rules? Would it have been better if he had killed me?"

"He could have killed you," they said, "and gone scot-free, because he isn't a Christian, but you," they said, "are a Christian and you'll therefore have to be put on trial according to the Christian laws. . . ."

To profess Christianity involves being laid open to unusually stringent demands. And Christianity here means membership of a Christian community, coinciding with nationality. The civil community and the religious community are one. These two themes are to grow during the rest of the book, as the enlightenment grows within the wanderer. Yet within a few pages there is criticism of that community for which Golovan is suffering, criticism of that community in terms of its representatives, those Russian bystanders who would have fought with money but not with whips. This note is sounded in Golovan's conversation with Khan Jangar. And the fact that Golovan is a peasant, and that those others are officers and gentlemen, can here, as later, when he takes from the Prince the responsibility of killing Grusha, and later still, when his interrogators aboard the river-boat are far from sympathetic, be allowed to carry the full weight of social and political implications. Not for nothing, either, are the Tartars made to behave better than the Russians. But the religious pattern can, it is implied, embrace those

injustices. And if the Tartars behave more nobly according to their lights, those lights are still false lights. One remembers again the rudeness of the wedding-guest to the mariner.

The treatment of the tribulation is plain enough. The Tartars are loving furies, who sew the wanderer's heels with thorns. Golovan is tempted in the wilderness. His refusal to own his Tartar children, because they are not baptised, and his home-sickness, given as a vision of the Christian Christmas, take up the note struck at the duel and represent the power in him for good, for resistance to temptation. But, "What's the use of praying," I said to myself, "when nothing comes of it anyway?" And so the Christian missionaries refuse to help him, in a passage once again highly complex, magnificently controlled and adult, the result of a very masterful and elastic approach. The missionaries are criticized; they are bigoted, stupid, and rather inhuman. And yet their advice, to wait and pray, is the right advice. Their martyrdom is the result of their folly. And yet it is a real martyrdom, and when Golovan realises that it is a real martyrdom, the first of his temptations is passed. The pagan Tartars are defeated by their paganism (the fireworks of the Indian missionaries), and Golovan escapes. There is an intricate consistency in the fact that the Jew should be martyred, as the Christians were, but that the Indian and the scientist should escape. And even at this point there is the ironical recognition that the pagan Chuvash may very well have meant better by Golovan than the first Russians he meets, the sinister fishermen.

There is no need to follow the story through the atonement and the purification. But one must pause again to record the honesty

^oOp. cit., p. 48.

with which the issue is faced. Golovan is the scape-goat. And time and again the community, for which he sacrifices himself, treats him ungraciously, unjustly, unkindly. Each of his individual employers fails him. His church, in the persons of the missionaries, of the parish priest to whom he returns from Tartary, of the abbot of his monastery, dismisses him curtly and harshly. The Army and the Civil Service reject him. Even casual acquaintances, the drunken ex-officer, the bystanders at the whipping-duel, the passengers on the river-boat, use him for their own ends. Yet still, we are to say, the tribulations asked of him by Holy Russia, by the Christian community, are just and necessary. It is a theme which could not, one feels, have been treated with honesty and conviction in any other form than that of the peasant *skaz*, or in any other than this tone

of rueful yet boisterous humour. And just because of this fitness, this inevitability of form, the "Holy Russia" of Leskov appears as something infinitely more respectable, serious and intelligent, than the hysterical chauvinism of the Slavophil Dostoevsky, as something indeed comparable to the contemporary vision of F. D. Maurice, or of Thomas and Matthew Arnold, the vision of a Christian community, in which the uniform of a civil or military officer will rightly command the same respect as the ikon or the host. In the words of a modern Christian:

Only in a national society which was conceived and comprehended as a body of Christians, and in which citizenship and Christian belief were inseparable in idea, could the notion of the spiritual supremacy of the state be salutary and not disastrous.*

Here, if anywhere, is the "meaning" of *The Enchanted Pilgrim*.

The Universities To-day

MICHAEL POLANYI

If our civilisation were to perish in the struggles which are ravaging it to-day, the record of our universities would leave a most characteristic token of it for future ages. The future historian will ponder on the record of our universities and wonder at these peculiar communities in which originality is at the highest premium—on these associations founded, as it were, for the express purpose of fostering non-conformity. And yet associations so close, so implicitly sharing a vision of their own—the vision which the founders of the Royal Society expressed in their motto: *nullius in*

verba, "we accept no authority." In other words: We want to look for ourselves and will believe only what we can see.

It was this rebellious mood of scepticism which moved the anatomist Vesalius to look for himself whether there actually was a direct opening between the two chambers of the heart—as taught by Galenus—and then, when he found no such opening, to declare—in defiance of Galenus—that there was none. Galileo followed the same line against Aristotle's mechanics, insisting that he could

*J. Middleton Murry: *The Price of Leadership* (1939), pp. 122-3.

criticise and refute the most generally accepted opinions by the evidence of his own observations. The great English physicists, Boyle, Gilbert, Newton and the other scientists who took part with them in founding the Royal Society, developed this rebellious attitude into a systematic method of intellectual progress. They were the first to organise themselves for the purpose of discovery by the light of the vision which has since guided modern universities up to this day.

For not science alone but the whole scholarship of universities was to be guided by that vision. The prospect of unlimited mental progress achieved through the continued application of unlimited scepticism has been accepted by all modern scholarship. Generation after generation of modern scholars have pursued this prospect during the past three centuries.

The future historian will find the universities of this day still professing to be based on these grounds. But even though he may perhaps smile—being wise after the event—and shake his head in wonder at the obvious weakness of the foundations on which we so long relied, I can hardly imagine that he would fail to admire and indeed to revere, what the last three centuries have built on these foundations. For far beyond the work of scientists and scholars at universities, the intellectual rebellion of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries has transformed, down to this day, every phase of our mental life. The Reformation was part of that rebellion, forming only one section of its opening phase. Another part of it was modern philosophy based, since Descartes, on a method of systematic doubt; while the rationalist system of thought which arose from this revolution was to be overthrown in its turn by a further series of rebellions denying the

validity of any universal rational standards. There came the Romantic movement vindicating the claims of individuality, and releasing thereby a whole torrent of new creative activities. And another rebellion occurred in the rise of the historic method which revealed the institutions of the past in the setting of their own time, and evoked for the first time a true consciousness of human history. And presently these positions were themselves destroyed by a further chain of rebellions. The Marxian theory reduced history to the mechanical interplay of conflicting interests, while psychoanalysis dissected individuality into appetites and fears. And once again the destruction of the previous outlook opened up new perspectives and renewed every branch of human thought.

No wonder that the method of unlimited doubt seemed inexhaustible to the ages which it so richly benefited. No wonder that it is still thought to be inexhaustible by many people to-day. In my own youth no progressive person would have thought otherwise. In those days we were no less confident than were the contemporaries of Voltaire that the only stumbling block of mankind was its inclination to believe more than the evidence of our senses would warrant. We wanted to smash up that stumbling block altogether. By a final effort of unbelief we hoped to liberate the world at last of all powers of darkness—and thus lift for all time the curses of war, oppression and poverty.

However—a great deal has happened since and much has changed. Outwardly we may still be found standing on the old grounds of radical scepticism. But at heart we feel more like people who continue to live on an old family estate though they are aware that their tenure has become precarious of

late owing to a mounting score of heavy debts. Fundamentally, our old position is shaken. For the revolutions of the twentieth century have revealed for all who have eyes to see that the hope of indefinite progress through unlimited scepticism was false. We have seen in Hitler and Mussolini how perfectly a radical scepticism may combine with the deliberate cult of beastliness. In Russia we have seen radical scepticism releasing a wave of modern political intolerance, no less fierce than that of the earlier religious kind. And these outbreaks occurred everywhere not in spite of a modern philosophic upbringing, but quite clearly as a result of it. Their principal agents were the intelligentsia who had been educated at some of the leading universities of the world.

Yes, the revolutions of the twentieth century have marred the vision which has guided the progress of thought for so long. We have seen universal doubt turning into nihilism, and perverting all the great aspirations of mankind. Revolutionary Marxism turned the sentiment of brotherhood into class war. Fascism and Nazism turned patriotism into bestiality. To-day after the defeat of Fascism we see the view that violence is the only effective method in politics still widely accepted in Europe, and we see also the doctrine still prevailing widely that it is the Government's duty to control the mental activities of its citizens in the interest of the common good. The intellectual rebellion of the past centuries has resulted in the establishment over large parts of Europe of governments which suppress even quite moderate manifestations of intellectual independence. The method of continued rebellion has brought about in our days a widespread decline of freedom. And where freedom declines our modern

civilisation—the whole legacy of the last three or four centuries—loses its claim to recognition, and continues to exist only in a subdued form, carried on merely by forces of inertia.

Here in Britain where a free civilisation is still in existence, and particularly here at British universities, we must now turn round vigorously to scrutinise the foundations of modern thought. We must realise at last that scepticism cannot in itself ever discover anything new. It can release our powers of discovery, but these powers must always spring from belief. Discovery is never based solely on the evidence of our senses, but also on our presuppositions about the nature of things. And above all, it implies a belief in the existence of an objective truth. It springs from a conviction that we can find the existing truth by studying the evidence with an open mind, and that the result thus obtained would be accepted by any other unbiassed person.

We must wake up to the fact that all through the centuries while we were saying that we believed in nothing but hard facts, we were actually taking for granted all the large assumptions on which discovery is based. And we must face the fact that these assumptions are to-day mortally challenged by a harder generation which is determined to practise in real earnest that radical scepticism to which we had so long and so innocently pretended. The modern Marxist—or for that matter the modern political realist or the modern psychologist—scorns our belief in the fair and objective pursuit of the truth. In their scheme of human affairs the pursuit of truth never enters as a power commanding respect in its own right. It either represents a mere cloak for some underlying interest or is recognised at the best

as supplying technical information in response to practical needs.

In order to defend themselves and to defend our civilisation against destruction by these doctrines, the universities to-day must first of all come to realise their true foundations. Abandoning the absurd claim of relying only on the evidence of our senses, we must claim on the contrary that we possess access to the things of the mind. Truth is a thing of the mind. It has neither colour nor smell nor hardness. No one has yet held truth between thumb and forefinger. It is an ideal, one of a number of human ideals reaching out beyond human knowledge. When we

declare our belief in the fair and objective pursuit of the truth and state that the universities are pledged to such a pursuit of the truth, we are accepting an ideal. We are professing allegiance to transcendent powers and are taking our stand on transcendent grounds.

Universities to-day must shift their foundations—or rather become conscious of their true foundations. They will then send to future ages a truer message. And they may even help humanity to reach that future without first passing through a phase of destruction which seems now to be threatening so close at hand.

From "A Chronicle Writ in Darkness"

HENRY WILLIAMSON

On Christmas Eve of the tragic year 1941, our family dined on pheasants, before a fire of "great ole bull-thorns," as Jack the Jackdaw called them, helping to pitch them off the tumbrel outside the shed where once again the circular saw stood bolted to its concrete base. All the children were present—Windles, John, Margaret, Robert, Richard, their mother Lætitia, and myself. The long polished oak-table reflected the faces of four boys in descending order of magnitude against the wall, Richard the smallest nearest Father and Windles the biggest farthest away, ready, as he declared with his merry smile, to make his getaway through the door should "Dad get tisky." For the moment the strains of overwork and the mental frustration of the war were lifted from the farmhouse parlour. There was a

feeling of lightness in the room. All but three acres of the sugar-beet were off. I carted the last fifty tons myself, but had to have Windles to help me, as about three o'clock of an afternoon I usually felt hollow—until I took some wheaten scones with me. Scones made out of our wheat, I had discovered, were wonderfully fortifying. I felt again and again a continued fortitude when I ate them instead of the bread from the village bakery: no hollow feeling, with consequent over-running of the imagination. Now it was Christmas Eve, and we were going to enjoy ourselves.

On Christmas morning we go to church, five children with father and mother. A last minute indecision, as the last footfalls are receding up the village street—shall father wear his bowler hat, re-

trieved recently from the dust and cobwebs of the granary, not used since foxhunting days nearly twenty years ago? No, cry Robby and Rikky; I don't bestways know, says John, still a little bit of a Westcountryman; YES! declares Windles, with his eye for the grotesque. Right, says father, Windles must wear this nice brown felt hat, bought in Jermyn Street just before the war. It enhances his thick dark hair, the vivid colour in his cheeks, the hazel-grey eyes—little of father in Windles, nearly all of mother. Must I? mutters the boy, for the lads of the village Cross—the tractor boys on the wall of an evening down by Sidney Sadd's Rag, Bone, Metal, and Rabbit-skin sheds and yard and rusty petrol-pump covered by rotting sacks ever since the scares of 1940—do not wears hats with brims at the moment, hats which therefore are worn only by snobs, who may be anybody who doesn't lean against a tarred flint wall or kick his heels on the worn brick parapet of the bridge over the river after the day's work. Windles mutters that he doesn't want to wear the damned thing; and Robert, the spiritually percipient, the boy who as a child always gave away his sweets to other children in record time, says, You wear it, Dad, you look very posh in it, really you do. Mother, in blue coat and skirt, and little beret with a grouse-foot set in silver pinned to the side (relic of departed days) has already left with brown-eyed Margaret and neat little brown-eyed Rikky—for Mother plays the organ which a boy with face stolid like a mangold, hair like barley straw, and eyes small as two petals of hedgerow speedwell pumps up in full view of the congregation. We hurry up the street, by-passing an old lady being helped by another, and slide into the pew and to our knees just in time.

When I was a boy I used to go to church on Sundays with my mother; I did not like going to church, it was dull and uninteresting, but there was always the relief of after-church to look forward to, and on Christmas Day, turkey and plum pudding, ginger and raisin wine, oranges, nuts, bon-bons, muscatels, Carlsbad plums, crystallised fruits, dates, figs, boxes of fancy biscuits, tangerines, guava jelly, and of course the books and other presents to look at, handle, and dream over. It was a grief to think of those Christmases now: there was a grave near the church, almost a forgotten grave. But Christmas is for the children. . . .

The Rector was away, prostrate from another stroke. Again I wondered how much the apathy of the village helped to wear him out. He was only about fifty years old. Had he tried to do good too quickly? The village, like all of England and most of the Empire, had been "let go," let down, for too long. Cricket on the green? A bright, clear, pure trout stream? A church filled because the Truth was being told, as it was told to the thousands on the hillside? Here is the temporary parson, a young, untried man, preaching about the near-holiness of war, seemingly out of a mentality that knows nothing of the true cause of the effect of the later scene on the mound of bones and skulls. There are many parsonic reasons why the war is a crusade, a holy war, all of them sound, logical, and material; and verily the tears of Jesus thereby are immortal.

In one parish the Rector falls, before his time; in North Africa, in the Malaya, on the seas and in the air, young men fall, before their time.

Four days later I went to the station in the darkness of the un-

risen dawn with Windles, who was going by train to a tractor course at Boreham Hall, Chelmsford. As usual, it was a rush to get there, through the darkness of the narrow, twisting coastal road, with dim, slatted light; the worn rubber wheels skidding on the ice most of the way. We leapt out of the Silver Eagle, we rushed down the platform, he leapt into a carriage, his bag was flung in after him, through the open window. I had already been up two hours, to feed and groom the three horses in the stable; and upon return to the farm, I took the horses and tumbrils up as the sun was rising red, and carted fifteen tons of beet and went down again as the sun was sinking red in the west, and frost settled over the sombre landscape. I sat before the fire all the evening, trying to summon energy to do the farm accounts; but what life was in me, resisted the change-over to mental work.

The next day little John helped in the carting of the sugar-beet, wearing the overalls which had been Windles', patched and repatched, worn thin and all the colour washed out. The men, who were on contract work, wanted to knock off at half past two, so I took the horses to the stable, and with sheepskin coat drove the tractor to Spong Breck, to get the plowing finished before the frost really set hard in the land. The moon arose through the mist of the marshes as the sun went down below the Entries Wood: a small thin golden disk and a red ball. Partridges called over the rimed furrows. When the moon was high I took the tractor to the hovel, let the water out of the radiator, covered it up, and went home, to see the Old Year Out, and the New Year in.

I sat in my leather armchair,

listening to the grandfather clock preparing to strike the midnight hour, as it had done for the past two hundred years, with whirr of brass wheels and jerk of chains holding the weights that bumped into the case as they descended. The kettle simmered, issuing steam ruddy with the embers of the thorn logs. Windles was away at Boreham, on his tractor-course; the break would do him good, give him an idea of method and style. Margaret had gone to visit friends in Yorkshire. Earlier in the evening Robert and Richard and their mother and I had played a game of Rummy. Rikky since Christmas had owned his own pack of cards. He played his hand well; but he didn't like losing too consistently. Rikky was five years old, a neat and tidy small boy with dark sensitive eyes and a direct, single mind—when he wasn't upset by emotional disturbances. This last autumn he had taken up his garden produce—his garden was about one yard square—and stored it in a cupboard, all laid out properly—potatoes, lettuces, beans, cabbages, carrots, and a heap of earth containing seeds that had not come up. A month afterwards I found the store by chance—most of it rotten. When I showed his mother, with smiles, Richard had looked mortified; the dark, blank look of mental pain came in his eyes, and without a word he went away. Richard did not know me; but he would one day; for Richard and I were the same person. He was too mother-tender; later, I would wean him, to give him balance; no more fanatics, impressed with the frustrations inherent in the age, should be prepared in the family.

It had been so at Rummy this New Year's Eve. Richard, so keen to hold his own, had lost again and again, until he could not bear the mortification; and with red cheeks

and blank eyes, he marched off. "We aren't laughing at you, Rikky dear," I called out, to be answered by a tearful, muttered, "Shut up." The door was quietly shut, and it looked as though our New Year's Eve party were over.

"It's best to leave him alone when he gets his moods, Dad," announced Robert brightly, smiling his big-toothed smile, his blue eyes and yellow hair making him Ariel-like. Robby and Rikky adored one another, and worked happily together: eight-year-old Robby whose mind worked so fast that he could not yet read, who lived in an enchanted world of the imagination: Rikky who in a slower voice repeated Robby's remarks, shared or rather adopted his moods, but who worked steadily and surely. The two children were members of a Gang, with headquarters in an old chicken house on the hills, fitted with rusty spring bed, water-colours (Rikky's) in rows, a sack of potatoes, camouflage netting left behind by the troops, a table (sack-form from the barn) and bits of wood representing Tommy-guns. Rikky was the leader: this was kindness on the part of the other boys; prompted by Robert.

The game of Rummy over, Rikky had been lured back, and "handsome prizes" had been distributed and disposed of—an apple, a rare piece of chocolate, an uncommon biscuit, a lollipop from the village shop. Afterwards, we had a dance, or a romp, which ended in a wrestling match between John and the little boys. We turned radio knobs, to get the loudest music. German music was preferred—drums, brass, and some drive in it, as opposed to the melancholy nostalgia of most of the "British" dance-bands, so in keeping with the general spirit of negation and frustration of the period.

When they were in bed, I took up *War and Peace*, which I was reading for the first time. But my mind strayed from the pages, and I got up to switch on the radio, and listened to Goebbels' *Apologia* for his Führer. I felt that Goebbels was loyalty itself, as he declaimed in his clear and resonant voice. O, the tragedy of the war, the tragedy of Europe—perhaps inevitable, inherent in the very spirit of man; the European war, the dissolution of Europe inevitable, as Napoleon prophesied to Las Casas in 1815, when he had finally accepted his failure to regularise work and production and consumption on the highest possible level for all the European nations, his failure to achieve the proportional sharing of raw materials and production under the planning of France.

The night before I had listened to Winston Spencer-Churchill's speech from Canada: a fine speech, realistic and logical, but (apart from the immediate necessities of the war) representative of the old system of things, as the other was of the new order. O, could the war have been ended in July, 1940, with Britain and her colonies "undefeated and unexhausted," in the words of the prophet of the Greater Britain. The New World for after the war, of which newspapers were at this time writing in idealistic terms, was possible before 1939: but not under a system which could never provide work and health for all our people, of mother country and empire. And now we were struggling for our lives, and if we won the war, we could only do so through completely exhausting ourselves. Would the war last until 1944? If so, Windles might have to go, he would be sixteen years old in two months' time, when he had to register. Japan was smashing away in Malaya, Sumatra, and the Philippines, to seize territory for

what she called her Asiatic Co-Prosperity Sphere. The British newspapers, on the entry of Japan, had declared that her Air-force was out-of-date, clumsy, inferior. Almost immediately afterwards the *Repulse* and *Prince of Wales* had gone down, bombed by the out-of-date, clumsy, inferior aircraft. Until he had fought and suffered in battle, no journalist was fit to write about soldiers or war; or peace.

Goodbye to 1941; now it was almost 1942, and the midnight news from the B.B.C. imminent. I pulled my body out of the armchair, and turned the switch. More heavy tidings: it looked as though Manila was gone. Would the Japanese walk into Singapore, by isolating it—indeed, it seemed to have isolated itself very successfully, under the Old System—and smashing it from the air: a giant being caught by Lilliputians—a decaying giant, whose Midas-touch could not now save it: the gold of the opium-wars, the usury of the sweat-shops of the East—all directly related to slums, to the decadence of British farming in times of so-called peace.

For more than six hundred days, for more than six hundred readings of newspapers, for more than twice that number of times listening to the news bulletins of the British Broadcasting Corporation and their complementary bulletins from the Deutsche Rundfunk—the British people had absorbed one disaster after another, until we were all heavy and even soggy with the dull strain of it, and the most sensitive were the most affected. Churchill was much criticised; but most people thought, and said, that he was the only man who could hold together the country and disintegrating Empire.

As I lay unsleeping in bed that night, I told myself, as I had during innumerable meditations, that I must strive to stop thinking

of the rights and wrongs of the war, and to accept it as a historical fact, as Tolstoi had accepted the Napoleonic struggle. My reading of *War and Peace* had given mental relief in the outlook that no one man or set of men or group or system of financial interests were wholly to blame, but that the causes of war were in everyone alive, and everyone living was but a reflection of his or her environment, which was an effect of incalculable causes in Time. This was my earliest theory, or belief, which I had thought out for myself in 1919, and held until faith was worn away in loneliness; when a "realistic" view of the financial-economic causes of war had replaced the poetic conception of all so-called evil as arising from misunderstanding. That this conception of evil was not yet acceptable to the general public was borne upon me in a conversation with a writer who, in her books, had condemned the war of 1914-18 in all its aspects, except that of human courage. I had said one day in April of the past year, as we walked to the higher ground of the farm, that I hoped a reconciliation would be made, as though by a miracle of understanding, between the cousin-nations of England and Germany: that the leaders of Britain and Germany and France might ride side-by-side through the streets of Paris and London and Berlin, esteemed and cheered equally in those cities, the deadlock of international finance broken in Europe, never to come again. To this she replied that she hoped she might be dead before such a thing came about. She was always talking about human happiness and kindness, and condemning harshly the absence of these qualities in others; it was the vehemence of her hatred that struck me, like a splinter of a mirror of England that was shattered.

The sweet violets were in flower in the woods and on the banks between the fields of the farm, the turtle dove was pleaching little black twigs for her nest in the thorns of Wilderness paddock. Partridge chicks, looking like gold-speckled bumblebees, ran behind their parents through the tall grasses of the layers and the rising corn of the fields. Only a witless man could enjoy the spring while the war was on: the war within himself, the war within all men. When a few days later Rudolf Hess flew to Britain in an unarmed Messerschmidt, I knew what had impelled him.

From my bedroom window there was a view of the two gardens immediately below, with the walnut tree set in the middle of the further garden. Old Charley Hammett used to look after the walnut garden, for Lætitia, and well he did his work. But he was old; he had a bad heart; and so he asked only half-a-crown a week for his work. We gave him many times that amount, of course, and hoped he would not feel unhappy when he was forced to stand still many times each morning after a bout of digging. He was a good, kind man, but his deafness was a handicap, and at times I fear my quickness upset him, though always after trying to make him hear what I was saying, and seeing the bewilderment on his face, I tried to allay any thoughts struggling in his mind by giving him a friendly pat on the back. Perhaps that pat added to the confusion of the dear fellow who lived with his wife on the Old Age pensions they drew weekly from the Post Office. His hands were swollen, like his legs and body; he moved with difficulty; he had worked hard all his life and his body was, as they said in the village of an aged man or horse or implement, all wore-up. One day

Charley went home very slowly; he was observed to pause many times on his journey from "ours" to the middle cottage of the row we had rebuilt in 1937, where he lived for a rent of two shillings a week, landlord paying rates and the quarterly charge for electric light. When he got home he sat awhile in his chair, in silence, then went up the narrow stairs to his bed, where after a few weeks he died. Since then no one had looked after the garden, except Lætitia in one or another of her rare intervals in cooking, mending, and keeping house for seven; looking after the bees and ducks and hens; building up and running the Women's Institute after the Rector had collapsed and he and his wife had left; playing the organ in the church with what skill she could assemble from the memory of a few lessons during her schooling which had ended abruptly by her mother's death in 1917, when she had returned home to look after an old father and a bewildered younger brother; and various other duties which she carried out with a cheerfulness which generally won the admiration of all who were not merely critical of what might have been done differently. I had not the heart to take on the garden myself, for by now, after four years of working sixty or seventy hours a week, as well as writing at night to reduce the farm overdraft, I was beginning to wince away from any new undertaking.

Below the wide and deep window of my bedroom, by which sometimes during the wet and unworking days of winter I sat, warmed by an electric fire, pen in hand and paper on the table before me, I saw constantly during the dull months a bit of England that for many years had been neglected. When I had moved to the cottage two years previously the garden

had been a rearing tangle of overgrown shrubs and bushes; the place was without form or design; or rather, it was that unpleasant thing, a pightle or parcel of land, neither truly wild nor truly under human order. In the village phrase, it had been let-go.

Between the cottage gardens a hedge of ash and elder straggled, tall and ragged. Elder is the poor man's hedge; a few sticks pushed into the ground, and soon there is growth, substitute for hedge. Elder grows rapidly, with sappy hollow stems that are useless for pleaching and inferior as a barrier for stock. It does not make a proper hedge; it cannot be tamed and ordered, like beech, thorn, and holly. Elder is a tree-weed. The man who makes a "hedge" of this weed is the man who stops the gaps of his "hedge" with worn-out bedsteads, ancient frames of bicycles and rusty earth-pails. That was the standard of hedge-making in the village when the war broke out; those were the hedges I had inherited in my garden. Generally speaking, the village was losing heart, and had been decaying for many decades.

It is difficult to see ourselves as the historian will see us, as some writer of genius, perhaps as yet unborn, may re-create the furies, miseries, and hopes of our times as did Tolstoi, with varying clairvoyance, of another age, in his novel *War and Peace*. That Russian nobleman shut himself away for over five years and with infinite care and patience, and sustaining within himself the power to endure, set himself to bring alive, within the pages of his story, the peasants and the landowners, the ministers and the priests, the battles and the sufferings, the loves and deaths and joys and tragedies of an entire Russian generation; more, of an entire European age. There is Napoleon with his new order for

Europe, directing battles and regarding the dead and the wounded—all in *War and Peace*. Napoleon, who failed in Africa, frustrated by the British Navy, who, turning to the east to smite an opportunist and treacherous ally-enemy, found the grave of his Army—and of his hopes—in the snows and ice of Russia.

No wonder the book was out of print in England at this period of the war, and being sought eagerly in secondhand shops. "Didn't you fight with bows and arrows in the last war?" asked a sixteen-year-old boy in the Air Training Corps, with a laugh, to his father who served in the war of 1914-18. For it is an age-long illusion that human nature alters between the father-to-son period of life. In 1807 it was the same conflict of ideas as in 1942. Napoleon used a technique new to his age, that was all; and he who drew the sword for the ideal of an enlightened and freed humanity to succeed his efforts, perished by the sword. He could not break the human idiom of genius versus mediocrity. What were the tactics of this originating mind in 1807? He massed his cannon at one point and made a lightning break-through, pouring in his heavy yet mobile troops, and turned the flanks of his opponents by a veritable pincer-movement. He was successful in battle after battle, beating the Allies who did not understand this new way of fighting. His men rode over bridges, a general or two at first, smiling and dismounting, and talking with the enemy, declaring that the war was over, a truce had been made, and peace would shortly be signed. The astonished Allied sentries then watch a French regiment marching over the bridge; not a shot is fired. They don't understand it. They watch the polite French gunners spiking their guns. Thus Napoleon crossed the Danube,

the war still on, and not a shot fired to stop him.

Was that how Hitler crossed the Maas in May 1940, and so turned the Maginot Line? It was all done before, by the Ogre of Europe, who was said to eat human flesh for breakfast, who won battle after battle and defeated nation after nation until in the end his armies were spread out all over the conquered Continent, and far into Russia . . . and that was the beginning of his end. He went too far. When he lost Africa, he lost the war; he cracked his teeth in Russia, where at last they learned, by retreating and retreating and leaving *partisans* behind, to counter the encircling tactics, the lightning assaults, what an Austrian general of those times called Napoleon's *blitzen* tactics.

Napoleon tried to break the hold of the English bankers on an economically-dominated Europe. He was blockaded. He retorted by a counter-blockade. He tried to starve out England. He closed the Baltic, and no more Russian wheat went to Britain. The price in Britain promptly rose to ninety shillings a coomb, or sack of two and a quarter hundredweight.

Napoleon offered a prize for a sugar substitute, and out of Poland came a wild plant from which was bred the first beet-sugar. He offered a prize of one hundred thousand francs to any chemist in Europe who found a process of making bicarbonate of soda out of common salt. Somebody won it. He started silk mills at Lyons and Lille to make a substitute for cotton, which could only come to Europe from America by way of British bottoms, or ships. And in 1815, when Napoleon was finally taken, he made this prophecy: he said, to Las Casas, "These British will come to rue the day that they did not co-operate with my system. In a hundred years they will be at war with a great European Power, arising from the valley of the Rhine." Exiled on the lonely Atlantic isle of St. Helena, Napoleon was regarded by all with wonder, respect, and a deep reverence. A British officer, one of his guards, was so deeply moved at the ex-corporal's death, feeling that something great had gone from his life, that he wept, and was inconsolable. "Such greatness of mind, such clearness of thought, is gone from the world for ever and for ever," he wrote home.

FORUM

TO BID THE DEAD GOOD-NIGHT

I wonder if, in the current discussion on a Way of Life, a commonsense fellow, only slightly tarred with the highbrow brush, may be permitted to say a word for traditional views. It is now a quarter of a century since I read Mr. Murry saying in the *Adelphi* that the Thomistic synthesis was the greatest ever achieved by the mind of man. He hastened to add that, of course, it had broken down, was inadequate for the modern mind. Though no metaphysician, I know a little more about St. Thomas of Aquin now than I did then, and since his *philosophia perennis* is based on commonsense it seems to me it will serve as a useful starting point for my interpolation.

I do not think Mr. Murry is among those who hold that modern science has changed us all so much for the better that we may regard our ancestors (in the picturesque phrase of Mr. D. B. Wyndham Lewis) as fools in fancy dress. St. Thomas's method of the thirteenth century is the scientific method of to-day, and advances in technique have done nothing to discredit it. It is found useful by men who, though some might consider them to wear fancy dress, are by no means fools. True, it makes certain basic assumptions, such as that things are more or less as we see them: those who share in the belated appreciation of Kierkegaard will not quarrel with this. In this intelligible universe, St. Thomas proceeds to orientate Man. If you accept his synthesis you accept the orientation, which has been found a happy one for men and women. One of the troubles of modern man is that he suffers from having

recently been dispossessed of the universe, his universe, God's universe, by mechanistic conceptions that were beginning to break down even before, to the delight of many of us, Mr. Murry and his brilliant band started to pour contempt on them after the First War. Appeal has now been made to a higher court: man has been reinstated. But so much has been said and unsaid that he feels himself disorientated. And this goes for all sorts and conditions of men, Protestant, Catholic, and fellow-travellers along various roads. Obviously, a great mass of rethinking is required, and some of it is being done. I call to mind a grand passage from Mr. Aldous Huxley's writings which begins "Leviathan and Behemoth are the heraldic beasts of God." It may well serve as the epitaph of all the Utilitarians.

But the process of reorientation is slow, and perhaps a practising physician may be permitted the opinion that the pleasantness or otherwise of continuing to live during the process depends for an intellectually sensitive man largely on the state of his digestion, or, if you like, his internal secretions. For most of the attempts at a new synthesis are thin: they illustrate the danger, pointed out by Dean Inge, of defecating to a transparency what should be the most richly concrete idea in consciousness—a man's idea of God.

Even Mr. Huxley himself, one of the most profound of our seeker-thinkers, has just given us, to help us, a Way of Life that differs from the Golden Rule only in being narrowed down to intellectual issues and decisions. The present

writer's pencilled comment on this solution for every problem of conduct was put in the form of a query: "For example, whether to double two spades, or go no trumps?" Lest any think I am frivolous, let me quote Mr. Murry again, from memory (as it goes back to an *Adelphi* of 1923) and by no means *ipsissima verba*. He truly remarked that a Way of Life that did not enter into man's joys had nothing to offer him in his sorrows. I back Mr. Murry against Mr. Huxley. A more comprehensive Rule is required, something like the inspired word of Paul of Tarsus about whether ye eat, or drink (or play bridge) or whatsoever ye do.

This brings me out of the wood, in which I am (perhaps obviously) not much at home, into the open country of the common man. May I say that the *Adelphi*, in these old post-war days, did not satisfy me because it fell short of a rule I had made for myself when stretcher-carrying in the previous mix-up: to leave no wounded behind. If my memory serves me aright (I have been over half the world twice since then) Mr. Murry's article, which I have paraphrased against Mr. Huxley, was entitled "The Wrong Tune." Readers whom it delighted will remember the reference was to Hardy's village orchestra; the conclusion was that many things in the Historic Faith—I think it was the Feast of the Assumption that was at fault—would not do for the rustics of England. These fine fellows I do not know well. But I have spent as much time as most men over deal tables with pint-pots on them, argifying. And while I concede that the *Adelphi* is not the forum for simple souls, I do insist that theirs is the tribunal before which we must lay any new Way of Life. The New Synthesis must bring them all in. The new orientation must make them feel, once again, at home, as Chaucer's

pilgrims were. And I am quite sure that Mr. Murry was misled about "the wrong tune."

From here I go on to suggest that the ordinary man regards life in what, for want of a better word, I can only call a superstitious way. The physician in me suspects that in this he differs less from his educated neighbour than the latter cares to admit. Says Mr. Sitwell:

The English aristocracy is never born,
it never dies,
But when it is ill it has a frightened
look on its eyes.

Matter of breviary. Common form. Mortal men, sir.

It is time, then, to look for a better word than superstition. If the great mystics are right, if the half of what has been written about the Curé d'Ars, for instance, be true, some form of direct awareness is possible to man, and not least to the simple soul, educated or not, even if like Jean Baptiste Vianney he might be classed by intelligence-testers as a half-wit. And one of the many amazing things about this awareness is that its findings are so true as to match-up with those of the gifted and intellectual ones, so that John of God and John of the Cross, if they had lived nearer, might have sat down and understood one another perfectly. And between these two extremes we have the ruck of men and women, with enough of the mystic in them to be aware beyond their bodies, and enough sense to accept an intellectual pattern of the universe if it is reasonable and has good authority behind it.

Among these, by what is often the happy accident of their birth-place, are the people who offer "Masses" for their intentions, send their sick to Lourdes (where some are cured) and bid their dead good-night with rough plans already made to help them on their way; who spend cold hours in a church, not always asking for cheap spiritual and material bargains

(though you may find fools everywhere) but because they have found the road the fakir searches for on his spikes, to know God.

That they often share in the modern disorientation goes without saying. In nothing is this more obvious than in the failure of Irish immigrants from "the finest peasantry in Europe" to adjust themselves to our complicated and over-urban civilisation. But in a wider universe they are at home, in a sense that makes quite paltry most of the pity that is sometimes offered them by our intellectuals.

It is clear that the rush of my writing has carried me over the edge. To make an end: nothing has been discovered by modern science, whether of new fact or

improved method, to invalidate the basis on which the Thomistic synthesis is founded. Granted it is more difficult to-day to achieve that simplicity of mind which predisposes to religious belief. That is often remembered. What is often forgotten is what all the best authorities have said, what even Luther and Calvin tried to say in a new way (and failed): that Faith is a gift. I have never understood this myself. Probably few do. But it seems to be laid down as one of the unalterable rules of a Game that must be played for its own sake, by its own rules, and without mental reservations, even if they be noble-sounding ones like wishing only to help one's fellow-man, or seeking to understand Russia.

A. G. BADENOCH

REVIEWS

The Alternative

Oswald Mosley

Mosley Books Ltd., 7s. 6d.

This is a brave and impressive book. That needs to be said quite plainly, at a time when its author is so systematically smeared that he can be disregarded with impunity.

Since it is the sole purpose of *The Adelphi* to promote "honest and fearless thinking about the total human situation to-day," it would be the extreme of cowardice were I to hesitate to salute a very conspicuous example of precisely that honest and fearless thinking which I desire—above all at a time when its author is the object of a campaign of calumny.

In the case of an ordinary man, such a campaign of calumny would

have the effect of making him lose objectivity. In Mosley's case the effect has been to increase his objectivity. My acquaintance with his previous writings is superficial. I used to read what he wrote in the early days of his severance from the Labour Party, and I dipped into *My Answer*. But it is my impression that *The Alternative* is definitely on a higher level than that book. It goes deeper.

I am a long way from agreeing with all that Mosley says in *The Alternative*. In particular he passes too easily over the evil features of the Nazi regime; his analysis of democracy is prevented from going deep enough by the memory of his frustration by the democratic machine; his concept of Puritanism as the evil spirit of British history is backed by too little objective

analysis to carry the weight he would put on it; he is insufficiently appreciative of the influence and value of the Christian heritage. This last is perhaps the most serious defect of his book, because it weakens the concept of the Western civilization which he passionately desires to defend, just as it makes him insufficiently insensitive to those elements in the Nazi regime which are truly shocking, so that he is tempted to condone the intolerable.

But his sympathy with Fascism, though excessive, springs from a profound realization that Fascism was an attempt to grapple with the situation produced by the anarchy and inertia of democracy. Mosley's considered judgment that "the only modern movement which could have succeeded in 1939 in bringing fundamental changes to the highly-developed communities of the West was Fascism" would, I think, compel the assent of the unbiassed observer, with the important qualification that it applies only to the big industrial democracies of the European continent—Germany, Italy and France. It did not hold good of Britain. Probably the root cause of the failure of Mosley's movement in the past, is that he too easily assimilated the condition of British democracy to that of democracy on the continent. He had been deeply frustrated, and he had become impatient. That is understandable.

Though the similarities are considerable, and though it may prove in the event to be true that even British democracy has not the consciousness or the moral strength to overcome its own crisis or to act as it should in the crisis of the world, it was nevertheless a mistake to assume that the failure of British democracy was inevitable. But if it is to succeed, British democracy will have to transform itself. And Mosley's so-called

Fascism, as he presents it in *The Alternative*, is nothing other than an impassioned appeal to British democracy to transform itself. Whether it was ever something different, I am unable to say. I should not be surprised, or shocked, if it was. It must have been terribly difficult for a young politician of Mosley's brilliance and insight not to be consumed with impatience and despair, at the time when he decided for extra-parliamentary activity.

When Mosley resigned from the Labour Government in 1930 in protest against its supineness in dealing with the unemployment problem, he was only 33—a young man. He is a young man still, as political leaders go. If he could have bided his time, and been content to be an independent but intensely and positively critical Member of Parliament, he would probably have been Prime Minister to-day.

By saying that I do not imply that Mosley has finally missed the bus. I do not believe he has. The decision he had to take in 1930 was a very difficult one. He had, even then, a much clearer and much more radical conception of the true situation of this country and of Europe than any of his political colleagues. They were men of routine, he was a man of vision. Substantially, he was right, and they were wrong. Their mentality was obsolete. The temptation to plough a lonely furrow outside Parliament was great indeed. But I think that in doing so he lost touch with the British tradition. Mosley's real function was to be the right-hand man and authentic successor of Winston Churchill, correcting the woeful deficiencies in that partly great man's understanding of the economic realities of the modern world, but learning from him the necessity which is laid upon a potential leader of this country, of

remaining at all costs a Parliament man.

To this Mosley could make a cogent reply. He would say that the tempo of history was changing at a speed unknown to all save a few; that precisely the effectiveness of Parliament was now, as never before, in question; that the manifest breakdown of Continental democracy must be interpreted by one who could read the signs of the times as pointing to the imminent breakdown of Parliamentary government in this country. He took the risk of founding an extra-parliamentary movement. He took the risk, and lost. But he was the only politician to see that a fundamental crisis was ahead.

I think such a reply is weighty. But I still think Mosley made a mistake, and that the mistake was really due to a defective sense of the continuity of British history, and of the decisive factors in it. It is connected with that contempt for the role of the Puritan in British history which, as I say, is apparent even in *The Alternative*. He should have waited—and prophesied, in Parliament. Perhaps it was his necessary destiny to learn wisdom in the wilderness.

But if the British Parliament cannot forgive Mosley, then, in my judgment, Parliament will have justified Mosley's defection from it. It will be a real tragedy. Britain cannot afford to lose a man like Mosley in the extreme crisis which now faces it. If it cannot recognise that his mistakes have been at least the generous and courageous mistakes of a man of insight, if it cannot admit that the branding of him as a potential fifth-columnist was a monstrous injustice to a brave but impatient Englishman, then its sense of justice has departed. There are real fifth-columnists in this country to-day: the Communists. It is fantastic that they should be allowed to make

their propaganda even in *The Times*, while Mosley is boycotted. The conspiracy of silence about Mosley is a disgrace to this country.

For even though I must insist again that his historical analysis is dangerously inadequate in some vital matters, his grasp of present realities is sure. It follows that the main theme of *The Alternative* is necessarily twofold: on the negative side it is the menace of Communism—that is the historical challenge to the West—on the positive side it is the necessity of democracy transcending itself in order to overcome this menace, by the creation of a new *élite* of responsible leaders. For my own part, I have no doubt about the truth of this estimate of the crisis. In a very remarkable final chapter (which owes a good deal to Nietzsche) he concentrates both sides of his argument and sets out its metaphysical implications. Here is his own summary statement of the negative.

It is clear that the world can save itself from further agonies, but it is by no means sure that it will. . . . I firmly believe that the peoples of the West will follow the paths we have described, because their ultimate good sense will lead them to see the necessity, when the present system fails and drifts to disaster with ever-gathering momentum. The Constitutions of such countries as America and Britain will permit them to change rapidly and peacefully to a new order of things by the vote of the people once the peoples are convinced of the danger and the necessity: our duty is to persuade them to move in time. But will they be left to themselves, and will they have time?

My answer is that Russia plans to impose Communism on the world by force, if she is given time to prepare it. That is the situation—the worst—which we must be ready to meet. Let us strive for the best, which is the peaceful acceptance of a new way of life by the peoples of the West, who will in time seek an alternative to disaster that is compatible with their culture, history and tradition. But, let us be ready to meet the worst, which is the attempt of the East to impose by violence on the West the creed of Oriental Communism.

Despite the traditional deceptive and evasive tactics of Communist manoeuvre, they should soon be evident to anyone with eyes to see. . . . In summary the Soviet plays for time in the hope that Russia can acquire the Atom Bomb with the conscripted assistance of the German physicists. They believe that an equality of weapons will give them a superiority in striking power, because, in addition, they will have police terrorism to keep order at home and mob terrorism to create disorder in other countries. In pursuit of this strategy they seek to militarise Russia and reduce every other land to an impotent mob. Meantime, Russian diplomacy keeps the world talking about nothing until the dual method of Russian militarism and Communist mobs is ready.

The plan of Russia is plain: and the answer is clear. The reply should be an ultimatum to impose the American plan for atomic inspection before Russia is ready to strike.

That is, in my judgment, sound. As for the positive side, Mosley's policy at the political level is a union of Western Europe, economically backed by a combined effort at the planned development of Africa to produce raw materials and food for Europe. I agree with Mosley's rejection of the idea that our aim should be to promote African self-government. That is the pernicious sentimentalism of democracy. Liberia is the classical and appalling example of African self-government. But it is imperative that the plan should be one that will safeguard the real human rights of the natives on the principles laid down by Albert Schweitzer in *Civilisation and Colonisation*—a study of which I would recommend to the author of *The Alternative*. He will find in it weighty and authoritative evidence to support his main argument with regard to Africa.

But the positive reply to Communism at the spiritual level takes the form of an insistence on the necessity of creating a new type of man. In his last chapter he develops this argument. It is significant that another eminent man who lived

through the between-war years as an active Communist in the Far East, and who has now become de Gaulle's right-hand man, M. André Malraux, recently declared: "The problem we face to-day in this old Europe is to determine whether man himself is dead or not. . . . The real question is in what form we shall be able to create man." Yet another who reached the same conclusion was the late Karl Mannheim, the profoundest sociological thinker of our days. "It is only by remaking man himself that the reconstruction of society is possible." Mannheim, the pure thinker, Malraux, the artist and man of action, Mosley, the political leader—all converge on this point. For all of them the renaissance and re-affirmation of Europe as the home of dynamic civilization depends upon the imagination to conceive and the will to create a new type of man to countervail the retrogressive type that is being created by an immense apparatus of terrorism and indoctrination in Russia.

Now what is this new type of man? Mosley, I think, has reached the conception primarily by way of Nietzsche. That alone is enough to discredit him in this age of shallowness and propaganda. But Nietzsche was a writer of genius, and a profound thinker: whose influence any responsible European might be proud to have felt. And Mosley breaks with that influence at the crucial point. He writes:—

It is by service that man both develops his own nature and aids the purpose of God. No conflict exists between individual development and the service of humanity: that was the error of the brilliant Nietzsche in posing a conflict between the character of his higher type of man and the interests of the people. On the contrary, the type beyond his Will-to-Power, which is the Will to Achievement, finds his self-development under the impulse of the derided compassion of his long striving to lift all earthly existence to a higher

level, at which the attainment of a higher form is possible.

Now, I agree, whole-heartedly, with Mosley and Malraux and Mannheim, that the salvation of Western civilization depends on the creation of a new type of man. A new type of man is being created in Soviet Russia: and he menaces the very roots of Western civilization. Only if it can counter this regressive type with a new type of its own will Western civilization survive. To think that the very idea of creating a new type of man is a romanticism is a stupidity of scepticism—and unhistorical as well. The "economic man" of capitalist society is himself quite a recent creation, although an unconscious one; while the conscious creation of a new type of man has always been the aim of high religions. Certainly, the process of creation now required is different from these, though it partakes of both of them. The former was the unconscious creation of a type by a new social structure; the latter the conscious creation of a new man by the intellectual and moral self-discipline of the individual. Now the degree of social integration is so great that society itself has become the chief formative influence on all its members. What is required is that the social order itself should be such as to encourage the emergence of a new and finer human type, without which democratic society will slip greasily into decay. In order to create that new social order, a new and fully conscious *élite* is required.

What is the function of this *élite*? It is to purify democracy by indoctrinating it with a knowledge of the necessary conditions of its own continued existence and future development. The time for irresponsible democracy is over; it is a dangerous and enfeebling luxury. Its time-honoured method of development by trial and error, by

the swing of the pendulum, is now almost criminally anachronistic, above all when it is faced by an utterly unscrupulous, militaristic and totalitarian enemy who commands the services of organised traitors within the walls of democracy. The expulsion of those traitors is a clamant necessity; yet even this cannot be done unless a new, rigorous and positive conception of democracy is asserted and endorsed. As Mannheim put it: "Democracy ought to instruct its citizens in its own values instead of feebly waiting until its system is wrecked by private armies from within. Tolerance does not mean tolerating the intolerant." Democracy, in such a context, means those citizens of the democratic society who discern the need and are prepared to take the initiative.

What will come as a surprise to my readers is that Mosley is one of these. Unless *The Alternative* is all humbug—and that is quite incredible to me—Mosley is making an impassioned appeal to democracy to become responsible, which is necessarily at the same time an appeal to an *élite*, or a potential *élite*, to take the lead in indoctrinating it with a sense of responsibility. It is perfectly true that he offers a definite policy of parliamentary reconstruction; and offers himself implicitly as a political leader who will implement it. But what else, in the name of common-sense, can he do? He does not offer himself as a dictator; he offers himself as a revocable leader: and, as I say, even that is not explicit, but only implicit in his book.

It is true that he gives his enemies a handle by the asperity and cogency of his strictures on the functioning of the present democratic machinery. It is a serious mistake in tactics, and probably also a defective analysis, which leads him to use the word "democracy," in inverted commas, as a term of

contempt. (Though, after all, the "feebly waiting" democracy of Mannheim's criticism is pretty contemptuous.) But it is impossible to deny that what Mosley is actually calling for is that democracy, by democratic means, should transform and transcend itself, and that is not merely a perfectly legitimate appeal, but an urgently necessary one. It is the conclusion to which any honest thinker on the present predicament of British democracy—let alone the French—is inexorably driven.

Nor can any honest thinker deny that the only means by which this process of democratic self-transformation and self-transcendence can be accomplished is by the formation of a new *élite*—men of a higher level of consciousness; a greater awareness, a more fully-developed sense of social responsibility—to dedicate themselves to the task of purging democracy of its fatal inertia. Such an *élite*, as it forms itself, is bound, in mere honesty, and as evidence of its own seriousness, continually to offer itself, at least implicitly, as the democratic leadership. To shrink from that is to stultify democracy itself. It is of the very essence of the nature of the *élite* required that it should be prepared to take responsibility.

I can judge Mosley only by his book, which I pronounce tactless at times, occasionally hasty and superficial, but on the whole brave, sincere and deeply thought. I have no experience of him as a man. It is possible that his nature is too impatient and dictatorial to permit him to exercise that patient collaboration with like-minded others which the times require. Moreover, my knowledge of the extent to which he has changed his ground since the days when he was the

active leader of a movement, is limited to what he himself says of the matter in his preface. The Fascism he professed before the war was too narrowly national. Now the excess of nationalism is purged away in the service of the idea of European union, which is one aspect of the new Idea, which is a synthesis of opposites. But the Idea itself is "beyond both Fascism and Democracy." For this reason, he says, he has refrained from the effort to found, or rebuild, a party. Again, I do not doubt his sincerity; and I think that his claim that the Idea he sets out is "beyond both Fascism and Democracy" is true. It is a synthesis of those opposites. Those who believe, *de fide*, that no such creative synthesis is conceivable, certainly have singularly little understanding of what is really happening in the world. Obviously, in so far as Fascism was the assertion of the will to national existence by nations paralyzed by the feebleness of existing Democracy, a synthesis is always possible by Democracy gaining the moral energy and intellectual understanding necessary to correct the weakness of which Fascism was the outcome. Fascism has failed; just as pre-Fascist democracy failed. The only thing that will prevent Western Europe succumbing to the disease of Communism is a radical renaissance of Democracy. There is nothing in the least singular in Mosley's becoming a prophet of this; one has only to grant him the capacity of learning from experience to recognize that the advance was inevitable. And he has done well, indeed, to refrain from re-forming a political party. That is certainly not through any lack of courage; it is from a right instinct of what the time demands.

J. MIDDLETON MURRY

The Russian Idea

Nicolas Berdyaev

Geoffrey Bles, 18s.

The first chapter of this book is forbidding. Confronted with the immense billows of Berdyaev's eight-page paragraphs—from which the names of a hundred unfamiliar Russian authors leap to the eye like flying fish, and drop back indistinguishable—the reader may well hesitate to take the plunge. But if he have faith in his author—and faith in Berdyaev his other mighty works should have inspired—he will not sink; rather find himself borne up miraculously, and reach the shore with a deeper understanding of many truths of history, philosophy and Christianity.

Berdyaev's aim is to elicit "the thought of the Creator about Russia," the peculiar contribution, that is, which the Russians have to make to the spiritual, and therefore historical, life of mankind; this he attempts by means of a critical interpretation of many nineteenth-century thinkers, in whom the deepest speculations of the people became refined and articulate. For those passionate questionings of destiny with which the Russian novelists have familiarised us, were never, he insists, a prerogative of the *Intelligentsia*: "The Russians meditated upon all problems in their essential nature, as if they were standing face to face with the mystery of being, whereas the Westerns, burdened with the weight of their past, meditated upon all problems with too much regard to their cultural reflections, that is to say, there was in Russia more freshness and immediacy; and it is possible to see something in common between the search for God among the masses of the people and the search for God among the higher levels of the *Intelligentsia*."

Elsewhere Berdyaev names pilgrimage as characteristic of Russia "to a degree unknown to the West," and incidentally allows us a fascinating glimpse of the pilgrims who used to call at his house and engage him in religious discussion. "The masses of the people," he writes, "have always produced pilgrims from their ranks, but in spirit the most creative representatives of Russian culture were pilgrims; Gogol, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Soloviev and the whole of the revolutionary *Intelligentsia* were pilgrims."

It is tempting to explain this peculiar restlessness by the immensity of the Russian plain, with its millennial encouragement to the nomadic life; this perpetual "discontent with that which is" and quest for "the city that is to be" by the drabness and cruelty of the steppeland village. Remote from all the historic seed-beds of civilisation, the Russian could have felt little of that deep-rooted attachment to a particular locality, a particular cultural tradition, which is at once the burden and pride of the West. His "immediacy" is the corollary of an indifference to legal ties: "Russia's moral values are defined by an attitude towards men, and not towards abstract principles of property and of the State." But if he is less "shackled by a legalistic civilisation" than the Westerner, he also lacks that sense of security which the Westerner derives from his laws; if he is more indifferent to the rigid distinctions of rank, he finds it harder to gain a foothold amid his fluid social surroundings. To this basic rootlessness and insecurity we may attribute the proverbial oscillation between elation and despond, between fear and suspicion of foreigners and a compensatory dream of world-deliverance, as well as many of the characteristics Berdyaev enumer-

ates: in particular, the intense vein of eschatological speculation, associated, as this always is, with a broken and catastrophical history. "Messianism is almost as characteristic of the Russian people as it is of the Jews."

The Russian Intelligentsia appear, in this perspective, as *déracinés* in a nation of *déracinés*. "Its feeling about itself was that it had no ground beneath its feet." To a less extreme degree, this feeling was shared by the western Intelligentsia, especially during the Revolutionary years; and I do not think Berdyaev himself realises how much some of the thinkers he discusses have in common with the western Romantics. He points out, it is true, that "Pushkin is the one and only Russian writer of the Renaissance type;" but over and over again one is reminded of Blake and Shelley: and had it not been for this affinity, it is hard to see how the Russians could have found German thought so congenial.

What is distinctive is the extremity of their speculation, matching the extremity of their isolation. Needing a philosophical system to give them security, "the Russians are not sceptics, they are dogmatists"; needing, above all, "the strength to change and to transform their own drab reality," they adopt the historical philosophy of Hegel with an enthusiasm unparalleled even in Germany. "To the Russians Hegel was the highest attainment of human thought and it was to him that they looked for the solution of all world problems. His influence made itself felt in Russian philosophical, religious and social thought. He had the same sort of importance as Plato had for the Fathers and Aristotle for Scholasticism." Hegel provided that assurance of the future which their own past and present belied. The Slavophiles, Berdyaev says, "absorbed the Hegelian idea of the

vocation of peoples and what Hegel applied to the German people they applied to the Russian."

The bearing of this on subsequent history is obvious, if we remember that Marxism is an offshoot of Hegelianism; and in *The Origin of Russian Communism* Berdyaev has already shown how Marxist messianism appealed to the Russian mind. *The Russian Idea* would be valuable if it did no more than prove once again how deep-rooted in Russian thought and tradition are many of the tendencies which have flowered in Communism, and how hopeless it is, therefore, to contemplate eradicating Communism by external force. Communism is "a dialectic moment in the destiny of Russian spiritual culture": it cannot be destroyed, but only outgrown. That Russia will outgrow it, Berdyaev has no doubt whatever: "All the creative ideas of the past will again have their creatively fruitful importance. The spiritual life cannot be extinguished; it is immortal." It should be remembered that Berdyaev has first-hand experience of totalitarianism, both Soviet and Nazi.

What is most remarkable in this book, however, is the degree to which the explicit is implicit as well. The author is himself a representative, and by no means the least, of the Russian Intelligentsia. Quite rightly he includes towards the end a summary of his own beliefs. But this fact is manifest even in details. ("The Russian people," he remarks, "have many gifts, but the gift of form is comparatively weak," and the reader may be disposed, rather wryly, to agree.) It is at once his strength and his weakness as an interpreter of Russia to the West.

On the one hand, it gives him unparalleled insight into the minds of the great Russian thinkers. He has shared their pilgrimage, all or

part of the way; their problems have been his own, even if he has arrived at different solutions. And from time to time, as in his memorable fourth chapter, exposition gives way to meditations, reminiscent of *Freedom and the Spirit*. On the other hand, Berdyaev is too deeply embedded in the Russian tradition to achieve any real detachment.

He has, moreover, a profound philosophical aversion to the very idea of causality, so dear to the western mind. Hegel's dictum, "freedom is the knowledge of necessity" is anathema to Berdyaev. Not only will he hardly admit that his own outlook has been conditioned; his voluntarism goes so deep that even the geographical and historical conditioning of a people is unacceptable. So far from the immensity of Russia being a cause of the Russian tradition, he will declare that "It was not by chance that Russia was so enormous. This immensity was providential and it is connected with the idea of the calling of the Russian people. The immensity of Russia is

a metaphysical property of it, and does not only belong to its empirical history."

I must confess that Berdyaev's metaphysic of freedom is alien to me, and since it is considered fundamental to his whole philosophy, I may seem disqualified from any just appreciation of his works. And yet they have meant so much to me at various times, I cannot believe that his vision is so involved in it as appears. At any rate, *The Russian Idea* is one to which I, with many others, will return.

Mr. R. M. French is to be congratulated on an admirable translation. May we hope that Messrs. Geoffrey Bles will be encouraged to place in his hands *The Meaning of Creation*, that early work to which Berdyaev so often refers? And what about a new single-volume edition of those three short masterpieces, so long unprocurable in English, *Christianity and the Russian Revolution*, *The End of Our Time* and *The Fate of Man in the Modern World*?

F. A. LEA

Vincent Van Gogh

W. Muensterberger

Falcon Press, 21s.

It has been said that we must regard an artist's output selfishly. However onerous the demands of output may make the circumstances of the artist's life, whatever stimulates his production is good from our point of view, and that is all that need concern us.

Some such coolness is necessary if we presume to look at the development of Van Gogh at all. "I live for the purpose of painting and not simply for the preservation of my constitution. Sometimes I

believe in the mysterious saying: 'Whosoever shall lose his life . . . shall find it.' This saying seems to be very clear to me."* Vincent van Gogh is not to be considered away from the background of the New Testament or as other, fundamentally, than an illustrator. Through depths such as few Christians could allow themselves to be called upon to face Vincent van Gogh came to that dynamic conviction of his destiny that was to sustain him for so long in assaults from within and without,

*This and other quotations are from *Letters to an Artist from Vincent van Gogh to Anton Ridder van Rappard, 1881-1885*. (Constable 1936.)

and which he expressed in language as amazing as his brushwork: "I do believe that my work has a life of its own and a *raison d'être* which will out-thunder all the mistakes—given a public with character enough to look at the things *with a reflective mind*." On a more mundane plane we have seen in almost half a lifetime the greatest failure in art become its greatest success. There was no thought, that a short while ago when Mr. Bernard Shaw was saying that any picture which pleased more than ten per cent. of the population should be immediately burned, that Van Gogh would become the most popular of all painters for his succeeding generation, the record-breaking best-seller of the print shops of the world. Everything of Van Gogh is a continuing miracle. What other painter, then, after his *succès d'estime*, and after having become the idol of the gallery, has gone on beyond that to become the technical inspiration of the *avant-garde* of the generation of his grandchildren? Delacroix? "The last of the old masters"—and now the last but one? For, like Delacroix, Van Gogh had no doubt that art was religious illustration of the whole human experience.

As with his great countryman, Rembrandt, our appreciation of Van Gogh has continually to be revised. If we have any condescension it calls for deflation; his "failures" should take on their air of triumph, and we must grant that he alone shall say which *are* his "mistakes." Rembrandt and Van Gogh are alike in that they seem simple and complete, perhaps deceptively so, at any stage of our personal development, yet at the same time promise more learning and experience than we can grasp. To aid us in this necessary process of periodic revision Dr. Muensterberger gives a study of the artist's

development and a most valuable selection of hitherto unpublished drawings. It confirms Van Gogh's grasp of drawing before the Paris period, his love of poor people and his ruthless self-criticism—a self-criticism that resulted in the destruction in himself of the slightest tendency to exploit his technical successes, particularly his already abnormal sense of perspective or of anything else that might divert him from his "destiny."

With the statement that "Van Gogh's art was new, entirely self-subsisting, peculiar, and it has remained so," it is impossible to agree in entirety. Artists often appear "self-subsisting" when their source-material is unfamiliar. Is it not rather that your great "originals" have the power to absorb from and create with recondite raw material? When we get used to it, when we have it at second-hand, pre-digested for us, does not the effect of originality in the artist's work disappear and an effect of enhanced reality take its place? If however, the source material is extremely recondite or "period," as in the case of Blake, the clues are lost and the effect of originality remains.

It so happens that Van Gogh's source-material in his early days as a draughtsman is flattering to our national self-esteem. English painters have had a proper respect for the Parisian second-string for so long that it is something in the balance to realise that a great European artist had a passionate admiration for what was our second-string in his day. Van Gogh's knowledge of the work of the English illustrators of the seventies was detailed and searching: "Do you know *The Wayfarers* by Fred Walker? . . . It really is one of the most sublime creations in that genre—with quite a peculiarly modern sentiment to it." "Do you know *The Mid-*

Summer Night's Dream by Harry Furniss . . . ?". "C.R. (Charles Robinson) of whom I sent you a most beautiful page, is rather variable, in my opinion. Still I have a sheet which is nearly as fine as Caldecott's *Afternoon in the King's Road*." And so on, *et cetera*. In the formative period of Van Gogh's draughtsmanship the obvious evidence is that he has been poring over the *Graphics* as they arrived. Thus Dr. Muensterberger's new early Van Gogh drawings, which must appear to the continental critic as quite out of the blue, have to us the look of old favourites, translated.

The sound "sense of direction" and straightforward illustrative ability of our minor Victorians is but a part of the source-material of the Van Gogh we know, but it certainly helped him confidently to

assimilate Impressionist colour and Japanese pattern when he got to Paris.

Though there is many another "decisive influence" mentioned by Dr. Muensterberger to make something like nonsense of his claim of entire self-subsistence for his hero and in spite of poor translation, his introduction groups the information clearly and states the problem of the "psychical law under which Van Gogh laboured" where "denial of success was characteristic of Van Gogh's whole career." All of which perhaps says no more than that a new kind of art criticism is needed to deal with Van Gogh. That however will not worry the artist or the man-in-the-street. To them the direct and compelling interest of the works and the letters needs no gloss.

RICHARD MURRY

There is a Spirit in Europe

A Memoir of Frank Thompson

Gollancz, 12s. 6d.

Some books it is very hard indeed to review, and this is assuredly one of them. It consists mainly of letters, and of extracts from a diary, all the work of a young British officer whose fate it was to die, after a varied army career, with the partisans of Bulgaria, where he is still honoured as a national hero; it also includes some poems, and ends with an account of Frank Thompson's relations with the Bulgarian partisans from Bulgarian sources.

Educated at Winchester College, and for a year at New College, Oxford, Frank Thompson, like others who had known the dignity of the liberal tradition, passed in early manhood into the Communist party. In the England of Neville

Chamberlain, there seemed to those of his mind, quite literally nothing else to do. Abyssinia, Spain, Czecho-Slovakia—one can appreciate the effect the sorry series of capitulations must have had on Edward Thompson's son. Like others of his generation, he had known and loved men who, like Antony Carritt and Jack Cornford, had perished with the International Brigade in Spain; the appeal of their party and their faith was irresistible.

Throughout his army career, which took him to Egypt, to the Western Desert, to Sicily, and to Palestine, before his final mission, his Communist conviction stayed firm. There is an exquisite appropriateness in the movement of the narrative. The enthusiasm which attends his first encounter with flesh and blood Russians, his devotion to Slav language and literature, his sense of the resistance movement in the background, in

Greece, in Jugoslavia, in Bulgaria itself—all seem to prepare the way for his final parachute training and its issue.

Yet Frank Thompson remained always the child of Winchester. His diary and letters abound in classical allusions. If he sees in the Slav peoples the saviours of Europe, the modern Greeks are still those who packed the Acropolis to hear the *Agamemnon*. Soviet war poetry suggests the verse of the Spartan Tyrtaeus. The passages relating to the Sicilian landing abound in references to classical literature.

England too he deeply loved, and homesick again and again, he wrote simply of the precious things he had known in Buckinghamshire and on Boar's Hill. To Winchester he is almost pathetically loyal. If at one moment he welcomes evidence of Finnish misconduct in 1939-40, and at another, strives to avoid the necessity of condemning Russia's treatment of the Poles they deported at that time, he shews a comparable devotion to his school. Thus, on July 8th, 1943, he writes: "There's a lot one can say against the Wykehamical tradition, but one can never say that it squares up with Fascism." In his own mind, he had clearly reached some kind of uneasy, personal reconciliation of the liberal-humanist tradition in which he had been educated with the hard faith he had made his own.

Yet his Marxist faith is strong in him. "Men can shape their own destiny; we can fashion the pattern of life anew." He is uncritical in his enthusiasm for the writing of Ilya Ehrenberg, and only slightly less so in his appraisal of Christopher Caudwell's *Studies in a Dying Culture*. Again and again he reminds himself that all is not in vain, that "when a democrat dies, his death is creative."

Like others however of his creed, he dearly loved his fellow men. Again and again one is reminded of

the presence in him of a remarkable tenderness and sensitivity. His concern for the private soldiers under him, the readiness of his response to Russian gaiety after Stalingrad, his anxiety to discern the nobility of the simple—all these bear witness to the quality of his character. If one calls this book significant (and that, I suppose, one must call it), its significance is on the deepest level; it is the revelation of a person. And as Frank Thompson himself wrote: "My own list of priorities is as follows: (1) People and anything to do with people, their habits, their loves and hates, their arts, their languages. Everything of importance revolves round people." (Page 19.)

It is easy of course to point out how little logic there is in all this. Humanism and Marxism are not easy bed-fellows; and the Bulgarian Fatherland front includes as well as the men by whose side Frank Thompson died, those responsible for the apparent judicial murder of M. Petkov. Yet, human beings matter; and the contradictory loyalties conflicting in Frank Thompson's mind, are loyalties that many of us, in lesser ways, would strive to reconcile. We too cannot deny the reality of that new spirit in Europe of which he spoke; even if we see it as a mixed spirit of ill as well as good. We too cannot deny the heroism of the partisans; they were our friends as well. It is easy to dismiss the attraction the Slav resistance movements had for Frank Thompson as the result of a false romanticism, mistaking lawless violence and ruthless will for strength and understanding. Yet these men fought and died for a cause, and in a hope, whose authority we cannot altogether gainsay.

For those whose hope lies, as does that of the Editor of *The Adelphi*, in the "free society," this book raises a number of problems.

- For one thing, it reminds us of the wickedness of those who almost rejoice in the breach between East and West, who come near rejoicing in effect (however successfully they disguise it from themselves), because they find in the breach a new justification for *simplisme*, for the avoidance of "crucial thinking," for the holding secure what must be shattered and broken. There is no future for the "free society" without a radical repentance. Why in the end (circumstances apart) did a man like Frank Thompson reach the "watershed of his life," where he did? Why did he turn his back (for it must seem to many that he did) on the inwardness of his inheritance? One can understand his fury with an ecclesiastical machine that saw in Franco *le grand sauveur*; with nice-minded *bien pensants* who blessed Mussolini as the champion of "order and tradition": that fury was shared by many Christians, not least within the Catholic Church itself. But why did he find the following of the writhings of the Party Line the only answer to the problem of the defence of man?

I suspect that the answer is partly in the fact that among the champions of the "free society" he could not find any realization of its inwardness (apart from the wild men like Geoffrey Garratt, and perhaps G. L. Steer who exposed the manner of the "defence of Christian civilization" at Guernica in a book that has some quality of greatness). It is only now that we are coming to see how hard a thing it is to present to men the vision of a way of life that is a valid alternative to the Communism of Frank Thompson's fellow partisans. We are coming to see that it is not enough simply to boast of the superiority of our treatment of Winston Churchill to that which the Bulgarians meted out to Petkov or the Rumanians to Maniu.

That boast can easily be dismissed as irrelevant; if we are to invest with true inwardness, our insistence for instance on the supremacy of law over power, it is not enough simply to become the interpreters and propagandists of the British Constitution. We have to realize in ourselves just exactly what it means to set law above power, to experience that supremacy as a spiritual principle. And as soon as we even begin to do that, we remember that the Anglo-American world has never acknowledged its guilt over Hiroshima and Nagasaki. There was present in that act a quality of lawlessness, of irresponsible readiness to find in the reality of power its own justification, against which the worst the Russians have done pales into insignificance. One could wish that the seemingly so high-minded Mr. John Foster Dulles; would shew the faintest realization of this fact.

At the Malvern Conference in 1941 the Editor of *The Adelphi* spoke of the lack of a "relevant pattern of holiness." And this book cannot but remind a careful reader of that plea. For there is a sense in which it does belong to the *genre of spirituality*. It is so much the tale of a pilgrimage, so much the record of the fusion of theory with practice in preparation, for the moment of action. It is intensely, even overwhelmingly moving; and to read it carefully leaves the reader, who cannot share Frank's faith, conscious only (apart from his reverence for the most lovable man, of whom this book tells) that he has no answer. He has no picture to offer of an alternative way, except perhaps (and this is a paradox) he suggest that of the contemplative who has forsaken all. There is no true modern analogue even of Abraham Lincoln.

Is there in the lives of those who profess that it is the dialectic of the "free society," not the writhings of

the party line, that traces out the nature of things, to be found a tale of pilgrimage to set against this one? There should be such; for it is surely the claim of those who champion the "free society" that its defence demands and opens the way to, a depth of living and experience that the savage simplicities of Marxism deny. But it is perhaps an index of our unwillingness to enter into the crisis of our time, as we see it, and of our readiness only to talk about that crisis that we have nothing to offer, as record, to set against this one as expressive of an alternative way. We need books like this to shake us out of sleep;

we need men like Frank Thompson to speak to us.

It is the function often of the saints of every creed to serve a better cause than they themselves know. By being themselves they light lamps brighter than the oil of their beliefs could nourish, and compel even those who differ from them to examine the authority of their inspiration and seek to make the truth in their creed their own. For ultimately perhaps it is only the saint who at once speaks to us by his life, and by that life, establishes the part-truth of what he says.

x

Albert Schweitzer : The Man and His Mind

George Seaver

A. & C. Black, 18s.

Civilization and Ethics

Albert Schweitzer

A. & C. Black, 15s.

Until Mr. Seaver's admirable biography of Schweitzer came into my hands, my reading of Schweitzer was limited to *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, which I studied with extreme care about twenty-five years ago, while preparing to write my own *Life of Jesus*, and Schweitzer's own autobiographical sketch, *My Life and Thought*. One effect of Mr. Seaver's biography upon me—and it indicates its excellence—has been to set me wrestling with Schweitzer's thought for days on end. Unfortunately, the results of that wrestling are altogether too formidable to be set down in a review. Even an attempt to summarize them is uncongenial, since it is bound to do violence to

Schweitzer's thinking and to my own.

But it is my considered opinion that Schweitzer, taken all in all, offers the greatest challenge to Western civilization, on the intellectual and moral plane, that it has ever had to meet. It is quite radical: and therefore absolutely salutary. In order to meet this challenge, Western thought will have to go deep indeed. I believe it can, and must go deep, and by so doing can meet the challenge. But I cannot undertake to meet the challenge, or even to outline how, in my conviction, it must be met, within the space of this review.

I can, however, indicate the nature of the challenge. Since Schweitzer's life and thought are pretty homogeneous, they come from both together. This makes things difficult for the defender of Western civilization against his challenge. For one is filled with whole-hearted admiration for his work as a medical missionary in Equatorial Africa: of its goodness and nobility there is no doubt. It is a moral challenge to every one of us who possesses some imagination. It faces us with the question: "Are

we doing as much for the triumph of the Good as Schweitzer is doing?"

When Schweitzer, as a young man, with the certainty of an honourable and distinguished career as philosopher, theologian and musician before him, decided at a given moment in his life, to devote himself to the service of the African negro, and to become a doctor of medicine also to that end, I do not think he had any conscious idea of offering a moral challenge to others. I cannot make out from either his own or his biographer's narrative, whether he obeyed a specific inward "call" to this work, or whether, having felt the call to follow Jesus, in the terms set out at the end of *The Quest*, he decided that this work was the means of responding most fully and unequivocally to that call. This may seem an unnecessarily subtle point; but, in view of Schweitzer's subsequent thought, it is not. The terms of the call in *The Quest* are not easily forgotten by those who have studied that remarkable book.

He comes to us as One unknown, without a name, as of old, by the lakeside, He came to those men who knew Him not. He speaks to us the same word: "Follow thou me!" and sets us to the tasks which He has to fulfil for our time. And to those who obey Him, whether they be wise or simple, He will reveal Himself in the toils, the conflicts, the sufferings which they shall pass through in His fellowship, and, as an ineffable mystery, they shall learn in their own experience Who He is.

I well remember my reaction to that now famous passage when I first read it, nearly thirty years ago. It impressed me; yet I rebelled against it. It was so grimly and formidably impersonal. It did a kind of outrage to the Jesus of my experience, thrust him away into the darkness of an eschatological mystery, so that I re-echoed the cry: "They have taken away my Master and I know not where they have laid him."

But, since the summons had taken Schweitzer to Lambaréne, I could not gainsay its reality or its compulsiveness. He had followed a Jesus whom I did not know, whom (he declared) I could not know—for that is the leit-motif of *The Quest*—except by following him. Since I am one of those who can only follow a Jesus whom they know, we parted company perforce. I had, so to speak, to go my way, following the Jesus whom I knew; Schweitzer his, following the Jesus whom he could not know, save by following him. This sounds, I know, as though I set Schweitzer and myself on an equality. Not at all. But I read *The Quest* at a time when I too was struggling, with all the powers I had, to gain a knowledge of Jesus. To accept Schweitzer's conception of him was impossible. It would have annihilated something in myself that was not annihilable. In this sense we parted company.

Now, through Mr. Seaver's admirable biography, and the study of Schweitzer's subsequent thought to which it has compelled me, I have, as it were, come up with Schweitzer again. And what do I find? The Jesus whom he followed has become still more unknowable and unknown than he was at the end of *The Quest*. He has indeed, entirely disappeared. What takes his place is an ethical imperative, which is described—very justly—as ethical mysticism, and whose content is "Reverence for Life." And I am told that "the ethic of Reverence for Life is the ethic of Jesus, brought to philosophic expression, extended to cosmical form, and conceived of as intellectually necessary." I am told too that, though "as a general proposition the definition of ethics as a relationship within a disposition to reverence for life does not make a very moving impression," nevertheless "it is the only complete one." And, finally,

that "ethics," namely, the ethic formulated by Schweitzer as Reverence for Life, "is Religion."

In fact, Jesus has now disappeared altogether. That is intended not as a criticism, but as a statement of fact. Nor has this happened by accident. For the very hub and kernel of Schweitzer's ethical mysticism is that Reverence for Life is "a necessity of thought." If that is so, of course, it follows that the mediation of this ethic by Jesus is unessential and unnecessary. Again, this is not a criticism, but a statement of fact. And this result was inevitable if Schweitzer was to succeed in his self-imposed task of demonstrating that the ethic of Jesus is "intellectually necessary."

Unfortunately, to make a sufficiently rigorous inquiry into whether Schweitzer does succeed in this task would far exceed the space of a review. Here I can only declare my conviction that Schweitzer has not really succeeded. But the magnitude of Schweitzer's challenge, and indeed of his claim, is by now apparent. It is not merely that it is a challenge to the fundamental historicity of Christianity; it is a challenge to historicity itself. And, obviously it gains vastly in significance because it comes from one who, by the test of works, is a Christian hero. Finally, it must be emphasised that the challenge is quite conscious and deliberate. It is thus formulated in the preface to *Civilization and Ethics*:

If we take the world as it is, it is impossible to attribute to it a meaning in which the aims and objects of mankind and of individual men have a meaning also. Neither world- and life-affirmation can be founded on what our knowledge of the world can tell us about the world. In the world we can discover nothing of any purposive evolution in which our activities can acquire a meaning. Nor is the ethical to be discovered in any form in the world-process . . . I believe I am the first among Western thinkers who has ventured to recognise this crushing result

of knowledge and the first to be absolutely sceptical about our knowledge of the world without at the same time renouncing belief in world- and life-affirmation and ethics.

Those are stupendous assertions, and that is a stupendous claim, because it also includes the assertion that a particular ethical doctrine is a "necessity of thought." Simultaneously, in Schweitzer, thought explicitly renounces all claim to give any valid interpretation of the world and of history, and puts forward a new and astonishing claim to demonstrate that ethical doctrine of Reverence for Life is a "necessity of thought." No equally revolutionary paradox has ever been put forward in the history of Western thought.

If it could be maintained, not merely would it annihilate historical Christianity—which is, quite conceivably, a necessary task today—but it would annihilate the whole tradition of Western thought, which is that, in the last resort, the universe is rational, and that history has a meaning. How Schweitzer can combine with this a conviction that he has demonstrated that the ethic of Reverence for Life is intellectually necessary is a mystery. Obviously it can only be a compulsion of what, in the very strictest sense of the word, must be called sheer Faith. If it were, in any sense, intellectually necessary, Reverence for Life would have to be applied as a clue to the meaning of history itself. An intellectually necessary ethic of conduct only is inconceivable; it must be an ethic of thought as well. Reverence for Life, conceived as an intellectual imperative, must necessitate a totally different attitude to knowledge and to history from that which Schweitzer adopts. Schweitzer's conclusion devours his premisses. In other words, if as Schweitzer avers, "ethics is religion," it must be given the

status and virtue of religion. It must interpret the world. Schweitzer says it must not. The Kingdom of

Heaven was never stormed by such violence before.

JOHN MIDDLETON MURRY

Autobiography

Neville Cardus

Collins, 12s. 6d.

Whoever imagines that Neville Cardus is primarily "Cricketer" of the *Manchester Guardian* is wrong. We have the authority of his entrancing *Autobiography* that he is first and foremost a writer on music. This confessed atheist asserts that music is his whole soul, and that his interest in cricket dwindled as his reputation as a writer on cricket grew. Nevertheless this book gives generous and thrilling return to the game which ensured him a livelihood.

Some of it we have read before. He wrote nearly two million words on cricket in twenty years and, like his beloved Barrie (with whom he spent a week-end as fantastic as anything Barrie ever wrote) he wastes not his best words by refusing to repeat them. He quotes equally copiously from the writings in which he takes greatest pride: those which resulted from the hard-earned musical education which is such a remarkable feature of his emergence from a slough of mean streets and meaner vistas.

He ascribes his whole career to chance. He was a chance child, a consequence of his unmarried mother's association with one of the first violins in an orchestra, from whom he supposes he inherited his feeling for music and an un-English-aestheticism. It was chance that placed the Free Library just round the corner from his home, and placed the Corporation tip in the same neighbourhood to invite this Manchester slum child to an

emulation of his flannelled gods at Old Trafford. It was the casually opened copy of the first *Athletic News* Cardus ever saw which advertised the post of assistant cricket coach at Shrewsbury, a post to which he was appointed without preliminary trial, and which gave him the chance of his life. Chance again dictated that Alington, the headmaster of Shrewsbury, and later of Eton, should discover Cardus reading Gilbert Murray's version of the *Medea* of Euripides, and be led to raise the assistant professional cricket coach to the position of Alington's secretary.

That was in August, 1914. Before the end of the war it was settled that the future of Neville Cardus should lie with the *Manchester Guardian*. His first job was to report a lecture by Mrs. H. M. Swanwick, during which he was the only journalist present able to jog the lecturer's memory with the name of Malthus, which earned him her good report to the fear-somely great C. P. Scott. More ironically than Cardus supposed at the time, Scott's eventual successor, W. P. Crozier, suggested Cardus might best recuperate from illness by attending Old Trafford when first-class cricket was tentatively resumed in 1919; he grew sick of cricket reporting.

Careeristically Cardus never looked back. Actually he looked back wistfully to 1910, when he appeared in print for the first time with an essay on "Bantock and Style in Music," which noted that Bantock was a derivative composer, with no style of his own, a view of him (Cardus recalls proudly) which was not common in 1910. In 1947,

this now eminent musical critic is again on debateable ground in deploring that our Brittens and Tippetts and Berkeleys cannot think of a single melody that would take possession of the memory, and have to hurl us into a new work as Strauss hurled his contemporaries into *Rosenkavalier* with one swift attack of the horns. Time, again, will tell.

Whatever chances favoured the formation of his career as a writer, it is not just chance by which Cardus has written the most interesting autobiography since John Middleton Murry's vastly different *Between Two Worlds*. His book has been most artfully composed into a harmonious whole. The boy who dreamed his way through from the severest initial disadvantages of the circumstances of his birth, a poverty-stricken background and an unimaginative, small piece of formal schooling, is now the conscious artist. (Though he still makes "delicious" serve where "delightful" seems the more appropriate word.) From sheer charm of language as well as force of personality, he commands our attentive following as he delights and engrosses himself in his own attractive career.

Between his two worlds Cardus alternated despairingly at times. The natural satisfaction of "Cricketer" contended against revolt from the temporarily frustrated music critic, "N.C." But at last (the dates differ by a year on different pages) the writer emerged triumphant from an assiduous apprenticeship to his craft in the period of Scott, Mills, Montague, Langford, Crozier and Sidebotham, and from a devoted study of music, to succeed as principal music critic

to the *Manchester Guardian*: that master, Samuel Langford—whom, Cardus says incidentally, he had never heard make a commonplace remark.

Cardus rose from a thirty shillings a week reporter to an undreamed of, and practically unsought, eleven hundred pounds a year as writer for the same newspaper, resisting the temptation of lucrative offers from other papers in the meantime. He insists that he never possessed initiative, his gifts showing themselves late. He believes his books on cricket will live and that his judgment of music is unassailable. It is evident that, like Burke, he has no contempt for fame, and no fear of obloquy.

And what is the significance of Neville Cardus as man and artist in criticism? Perhaps it is as an excellent example of the persistence of spiritual values that he is most truly significant. He has made really aristocratic use of his chances. Instinctively sidestepping the entanglement of early politically socialist impulses, without conscious ambition or pure deliberation, learning the language of music and to detect the core of English character exactly as a boy learns his everyday speech, he has gone on his somehow unhaphazard way of piecemeal writing for daily publication. Born into the narrow confines of ugliest England, a delicate and backward graduate at the University of Life, Cardus lived to dwell on the beauties of England and its literature, and to interpret an international art liberally and devotedly in the uniquely hospitable columns of a provincial newspaper which circulates throughout the civilised world.

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Commentary: Malraux and De Gaulle

BY THE EDITOR

To be sanguine about the project of Western European Union launched in January by Mr. Bevin with the support of five-sixths of the House of Commons, would be to be complacent. Theoretically, it is the necessary and obvious riposte to the naked and unabated aggressiveness of Russia and her openly declared policy of doing her utmost to wreck the Marshall plan. But to carry the idea of this obvious defensive move into reality requires a power of moral and imaginative energy which we have no right to assume that the democracies of Western Europe possess. The moral ambiguity of the origination of Western democracy now makes itself felt. In that origination egoistic individualism and the authentic desire for justice were inextricably mixed. For the last thirty years the amount of dross in the metal has been showing more and more. The greater the strain, the more the cracks are visible. Now that a close political and economic union of Western Europe is an urgent necessity, the yellow streak in existing democracy alarmingly appears.

The egotism is visible, everywhere. It is evident in the continued refusal of the British trade unions to admit that it is their moral duty to abandon their custom of sectional wage-bargaining and their insistence on differential wage rates (e.g. that an engineer or electrician must always have, say, half as much again as an agricul-

tural labourer). The continuance of these practices, the one obsolete, the other always immoral, is a running sore in the commonwealth which will make it impossible to prevent inflation and the insidious growth of the black market in Britain.

The egotism is still more evident in France. The real cause why the French Government has suddenly broken the rules of the sterling area is a desire to repatriate some of the enormous holdings of dollars and other hard currencies illegally acquired by anti-social citizens. The deep-seated weakness of France is apparent throughout the whole episode. The people whose money the Government is trying to bring back into France are in fact traitors to their country, whom the Government has been too weak or too half-hearted to control.

If we in Britain are in a better way than that, it is not permitted to congratulate ourselves. In isolation we might have a chance of overcoming our own pronounced tendencies towards disintegration. But we cannot isolate ourselves. Irrevocably now the destiny of France is our destiny; her weakness, our weakness. The Western union which is now imperative must be primarily an 'Anglo-French union. From that union, in spite of all the brave phrases of the statesmen on either side, by her recent action France has backed away—towards the abyss.

It is idle to say that France is

short-sighted. What or who to-day is France? The fundamental question is whether France exists: that is to say, whether there is in France a sufficient number of citizens who have the moral will to be a nation—to be France, *quand-même*. The act of the French government was not the act of a nation. It was not really approved even by the precarious parliamentary combination ironically called “the Third Force,” which was split from top to bottom over the issue. And “the Third Force” itself can in no sense be said to represent France. Moreover, the act itself was a step towards national suicide. It is fatal for France to detach herself from Britain.

Nor is there any sound reason for saying that France wanted to do so: simply because at the present moment France, as a political entity, or nation with a responsible “personality,” does not exist. It is a chaos of conflicting “interests,” for none of which the salvation of the commonweal is the supreme law. That is, of course, an instance of the exaggeration inevitable when one regards, as one must, a democratic nation as a moral personality. There are thousands, perhaps even a million, of Frenchmen, for whom the salvation of the commonweal is the supreme law. But there are not enough of them. Too few Frenchmen believe in France, too few *love* France, to put the salvation of the commonweal above their own narrow personal interests.

Let us speak clearly. Those who are least to be blamed for this attitude are the French industrial workers. If they have followed the Communist lead, and become overtly anti-national, it is not through any particular hatred they feel towards their own country. It is because their own country has thrust them out. Every man *must* prefer his own narrow interest to the salvation of his country when

that interest is narrowed to getting enough food to keep alive. Men cannot begin to be citizens so long as they are starved. If any French Government could have the strength to enforce throughout France a system of rationing the prime necessities of life as in England, the industrial workers would begin to believe in France, and the Communist influence upon them would soon be diminished. It is precisely because no French government is strong enough to enforce this elementary justice that France does not exist. She is the skeleton of a nation. The common will to justice, which alone can bind a democratic nation together and give it a soul, is lacking.

The French industrial workers follow the Communists. Why not? It is humanly right that they should. The Communists offer them the fundamental justice that they are denied. Whether the Communist leaders are sincere in this is another matter. As far as the industrial workers of France are concerned, the Communists say the things that are true: they speak to their condition. To expect the workers not to follow them is to expect them to be saints: the only class in France that believes in France and is willing to suffer, every day, for France.

What, in the eyes of the industrial workers, is the recent act of the French government? A plain proof that it dare not enforce elementary justice against the creatures who have betrayed France, who have made fortunes out of collaboration with the Germans, out of the black market, out of the starvation of the French worker. These are all to be forgiven; these are all to become honourable citizens, on condition that they no longer conceal their ill-gotten gains.

The Cominform could ask for nothing better. One more piece of

evidence to convince the French worker that he has absolutely nothing to hope for from France, unless the Communists win. One more big nail in the coffin of Western union. The opponents of the Communists have, by a process inevitable in a nation divided to the point of national non-existence, done the work of the Communists for them.

The circle seems irredeemably vicious. There is only one possible solution which can preserve the nationhood of France. A Communist victory is not a solution. It could not be achieved even by civil war, which would plunge France in unimaginable ruin. It is reasonably certain that the Communist leaders (who are no fools) are not working for victory of this kind. They are simply working to accelerate the disintegration of France, to make abortive any effort at Western union, to defeat the Marshall plan. What they hope to get out of this disintegration of France, and consequently of Western Europe, it is hard to say. Perhaps they do not really know themselves. But probably they have the contemporary monkey-faith that, as the decay of Western Europe proceeds apace, Communism will be the only positive idea round which human purpose may crystallize.

If it is, as it is for *The Adelphi*, a matter of principle that the surrender of Western Europe—and, as Péguy would have said, *nommément*, of France—to Communism means death to the European idea, it is apparent that the salvation of France, which is necessary to the salvation of the European idea, can be accomplished in only one way. The idea of France must be revived or reborn in some millions of French minds and hearts: and reborn in such a form that the industrial workers themselves can believe in it. That, and nothing else is the

crux. The new idea of France must be the idea of a France which insists on its workers being received back into the community from which the old France, the dying France which exists, has thrust them out. The new France must be a France that insists, at all costs, on doing justice to the industrial workers.

But this justice must be done as part of the idea of France, as implicit in the true idea of the French nation. The false and deathly notion that justice can be done to the workers only as part of the anti-national idea of totalitarian Communism must be thrust out by the true idea that no nation can be a nation to-day except in virtue of its determination to serve the idea of justice. Justice to the workers in the name of France, not in the name of Russia—in that cry, that purpose, is the only salvation of France.

This is de Gaulle's opportunity. Is he capable of taking it? Is he prepared to take it? There is no doubt that he believes in France, in a new and purified France, with a passion felt by few leading Frenchmen to-day. Is it only a vague "mysticism"? Or does he realize that the only way the idea of France can be regenerated is by making it identical with the idea of justice to the workers, as a matter of the conscience and duty of France? For this is the only way in which the Revolutionary idea can be united with the Christian idea. In this new idea of France the terrible cleavage which has brought France to the brink of death can be healed. *Guérison au point de la lame*.

In view of the sympathetic attitude we took, in our last commentary, towards de Gaulle, it is necessary to ask whether he, in turn, will not be compelled to condone the treachery of possessions and interests. What solid evidence is there that he has the will to

discipline them? It is specious but false tactics for him to wait, in silence, for the democratic machine to seize up again, for the call for the "saviour" to be raised. No "saviour" can save France. That is certain. Either the citizens of France will save France, or France will not be saved at all. In order that de Gaulle should be the inspirer and the servant of the common will of Frenchmen to save France, it is necessary that he should set out a programme of salvation—in detail, with all the new civic obligations which justice to the workers must impose.* That is the only way of rousing the common will, if it exists; or evoking it, if it does not.

§

It would be well if de Gaulle would publicly subscribe to the duties which M. Jean-Paul Sartre, in his lecture at the Sorbonne under

*In a valuable article "An Estimate of Gaullism" in *The Observer* (Feb. 8, 1948) Mr. Arthur Koestler gives the following relevant information:

"The 'free associations' of management and employees within production units to which de Gaulle referred in his St. Etienne speech should not be confused with the Fascist type of corporate State.

It was an allusion—awkward in its text like most of de Gaulle's excursions into the social field—to a social experiment which is practised at present in about 1,100 factories in France, employing anything from twenty to a thousand workers each, where wages over and above the basic rate are fixed monthly by a kind of joint production committee according to the total turnover of the firm. It is a kind of half-way house between the co-operative and the bonus system, which has so far produced quite promising results.

As over 80 per cent. of the factories in France employ fewer than 200 workers each, the extension of the experiment on a national scale is not beyond the range of possibility and has many advocates in the ranks of the *Force Ouvrière*, who have come to realise that classic syndicalist conceptions and methods are out of date.

The *Force Ouvrière* is the somewhat heterogeneous anti-Communist working-class movement which has lately developed.

the auspices of Unesco, declared to be incumbent on the French man of letters to-day. They are not different from those of the statesman, for in M. Sartre's view the French writer to-day must be the instrument of the national "consciousness."

A new liberty has to be realized; therefore it has to be re-thought. If we condemn machiavellianism, as we must, we cannot do it justly in the name of liberty which millions of men do not possess. It must be done in the name of an end which machiavellianism excludes, and which we must define. In other words, I do not believe it possible for a writer to-day to have a good conscience as a writer if he has not defined the socialism which will give concrete and positive liberty, if he is not working precisely on this plane, and if he has not defined it concretely, and for himself also.

In the same book of Unesco lectures from which this quotation is taken (*Les Conférences de l'Unesco*: Paris, Fontaine, 15s.) M. Sartre is followed by M. André Malraux, who has definitely declared himself for de Gaulle. At the beginning and the end of his lecture, he affirms his attitude towards the spiritual crisis of Europe. The nature of that crisis M. Malraux formulates rightly, by universalizing the problem of France: "The problem which faces us to-day is to know whether to-day, in this ancient land of Europe, Man is dead—yes, or no?" What does that question mean? By Man, Malraux means Man in his moral dignity. The threefold hope of the nineteenth century was in the advance of science, the establishment of peace, and an increase in human dignity. For Peace, we need not speak; Science—Bikini. As for the moral dignity of Man—

Torture has meant for us much more than pain. . . . There has been in the world suffering of such a kind that it remains confronting us, not merely as a dramatic, but as a metaphysical fact—such that Man is compelled to answer not only for what he wanted to do, not only for what he wants to do, but for what he believes he is.

Therefore the question is: Can Man remake himself so that he shall retain his moral dignity?

It is profoundly indifferent for each one of you students whether you are communist, anti-communist, liberal, or whatever else, because the only real problem is, beyond these political structures, to know in what form we can recreate Man. . . .

I understand that, whatever humanism we seek, it is doubtful whether it will spare us war. But it was equally doubtful that the world of the deepest charity—Christianity or Buddhism—would suppress war, because it did not suppress it. Cultures have never been in control of the whole of human nature, which they have influenced only in a very slow and timid way; but they have been the means of allowing man to reach an understanding with himself, and, on the basis of this understanding, to try to deepen his comprehension of his destiny. Christianity did not suppress war, but it created the image of Man confronting war which Man could look in the face.

We shall perhaps go no further, but we shall go a long way and we shall have made a mighty change, if we can make Europe, facing its social problems, its military problems, its tragic problems, create at last an idea of Man that it can look in the face.

When this idea of Man arose, against what did it arise? Against the Gods and against the demonic. It was the idea of Man alone, capable of escaping from the human condition by drawing from himself the profound forces which he had formerly sought outside himself. He can only exist against the crushing weight of destiny by ordering himself on a chosen part of himself. In the idea of culture there is no profounder structure than that which is born of this necessity which Man experiences of ordering himself as a function of what he recognises as the divine part of himself.

At the end of the lecture, M. Malraux returns to the theme, and answers his question.

It is not at all certain that the European man is dead, but it is certain that he is abandoned, that he himself is abandoning his values, and that he is preparing to die in the same fashion that any ruling class or any ancient Empire decides to die, from the moment when it has no longer decided to live.

Man is gnawed away by the masses, as he was by the individual. The individual and the masses in the same way pose the problems where they are not, and brush aside the fundamental problem, because they assume the funda-

mental problem. Perhaps it does not belong to the individual himself; but it does belong to each one of us to create Man by what means he has; and the first is to try to conceive Man. . . .

A humanism is possible; but we must say to ourselves, quite clearly, that it is a tragic humanism. We are faced with an unknown world; we confront it with conscience. And that, we alone will. Make no mistake: the will to conscience, the will to discovery, as fundamental values, belong to Europe and to Europe alone.

That puts the great question eloquently and well. How blessed, and how different—how essentially other than what it is—would the situation be if we could answer: "What in the name of European man Malraux calls upon us to do, Christianity has already called us to do." Christianity indeed does precisely that. But Malraux shews that he knows that as well as anybody, and better than most, when he says: "Christianity did not suppress war, but it created the image of Man confronting war which Man could look in the face," and when he adds, "Perhaps we shall go no further." Equally, too, Christianity contains the image of European man confronting the unknown future of to-day, with his will to conscience and his will to the discovery of the unknown. The Christian image of Man is eternal—or coeval with Man. What has dimmed it is its very eternality. It has been so long transcendent that it is no longer real—in the experience of Man, because Man himself has disintegrated. The image of Man, like Man himself, has been "gnawed away first by the individual, then by the masses." Man will not be recreated without recreating the image of Man.

Christianity is, without any doubt at all, the religious form of Malraux's "tragic humanism." It is the vision of God that arose, and will always arise, from the tragedy of "tragic humanism." It is that which can sustain "tragic humanism," because it was born of

it. But to understand Christianity thus seems at the present moment beyond the power of Christianity itself. It is in the thought and act of a Malraux, that Christianity is being re-thought and reborn. Yet the thought of a Malraux thinks that it is thinking beyond Christianity.

And so, indeed, it is, for Christianity, whatever it may be in its eternal potentiality, is in fact what Christians think and do. Nothing in their thinking and doing since the human crisis declared itself, or in the period while it was gathering, has been remotely like a new revelation of the Christian God. Christianity, in the visible Churches, is preparing to die with just the same lassitude as "any ruling class, any ancient Empire, decides to die, from the moment when it is no longer resolved to live." A Christianity that wills to live will be a Christianity that wills to die in the empirical forms maintained in existence by its wrongful claim to transcend the human condition at a cheaper price than enduring it.

In its perennial reality Christianity brings a "supernatural" endorsement to the validity of Malraux's appeal. But the spurious and verbal Christianity which exists, tithing mint and cummin, is much more likely to pretend to be superior to Malraux's "humanism," in order to evade its challenge, than to take the challenge to its heart. What has made Christianity trivial is the assumption of Christians that *they* have nothing to learn on their pulses, no revolutions to undergo. A tragic humanist did all that for them on Calvary. The supernatural capital he accumulated by his sacrifice now maintains them as rentiers—or so they suppose. As so supposing, they behave.

For a long while indeed this spiritual capital really did *earn* dividends, because it was put out in human minds and hearts, which

traded with the talent, took risks and built a civilization. Now for generations the epigoni, falsely thinking it a guilt-edged security, have been living on the capital itself, till it is almost, if not quite exhausted. No one knows how to use it productively in relevant Christian action; and not many think it even a decent subject of inquiry. Action, for all but the few—a Schweitzer, a Gill, a George Davies—is dictated by this world, "conformed to the pattern" of a dying society, in which the anti-Christian individualist—and the individualist is anti-Christian whether he goes to Church or not—has created the anti-Christian mass; and Man is gnawed away by both.

Malraux's voice is the voice of authentic Christianity, the more authentic in that it leaves Christianity out of it. That has to be. For empirical Christianity has become the faith in a foregone conclusion. Malraux puts it back where it began—as the taking of the Risk, not merely in thought, but in action. That is where Christianity begins. That is where it can begin anew. When Christians understand that the only reason God has given them the security they have is to enable them to take *the* Risk, joyfully; when they are glad where Malraux is grim, but they think the same thoughts and do the same things as Malraux—then, and not till then, will Christianity speak to Man's condition to-day.

§

Malraux is de Gaulle's intellectual chief of staff. He has made his choice, no doubt, for good and compelling reasons. Can de Gaulle realize Malraux's philosophy in action? It is a question we must ask, though we know we cannot answer it. For action, of this order, involves an appeal to the very soul of France. Is that alive or dead?

Or is it flickering between life and death, so that no man can tell whether it will respond to a summons to a life "beyond communism, anti-communism, liberalism"—all now become prisons for the soul?

Malraux quotes de Gaulle:

I remember General de Gaulle looking into the immense horizon from Colombey, whence there is nothing but forests: to be seen, and saying: "That, once upon a time, was covered with farms, and in this piece of country, there was a descent of names until the fourth century. From the fourth to the ninth century, not a name was continued. France had had 20 million inhabitants, 4 million remained." And he added: "And yet . . . there is still France."

Is that an illusion? It depends. Only the living soul of France, uttering itself in the living will of Frenchmen, can make it true. But that they *could* make it true there is no doubt at all. The mortal sin of Communism is that it denies this possibility: but the same mortal sin has been committed by the avaricious bourgeoisie, the grasping peasants, who have made the canker of Communism possible.

Can de Gaulle keep his summons *pure*? Has he the courage to avoid appealing to any "interests" what-

soever? Neither to those of the worker, the peasant, or the bourgeoisie? To demand and exact the just sacrifices from them all, in the name of France?

Only thus can France survive, only thus England, only thus Europe—which is being torn to pieces and dragged to destruction by "interests." If "interests" are decisive for Man, totalitarianism—and torture—will win.

One last word. The dangerous element, in Malraux's speech and de Gaulle's silence, is the emphasis on the advance into the *unknown*. The will to the discovery of the unknown is good, on one condition: that it is governed by the will to conscience. If the will to conscience is the guide, the unknown is not as unknown as all that. Conscience in France to-day demands justice for the worker, above all else. The unknown is therefore a limited unknown. It is that condition of things into which those Frenchmen will venture who determine that, in the name of France, justice shall be done to the workers—and act, and take the consequences.

J. MIDDLETON MURRY

Neither Victims nor Executioners

ALBERT CAMUS

The seventeenth century was the century of mathematics, the eighteenth that of the physical sciences, and the nineteenth that of biology. Our twentieth century is the century of fear. I will be told that fear is not a science. But science must be somewhat involved since its latest theoretical advances have brought it to the point of negating itself while its perfected technology threatens the globe itself with destruction. Moreover, although fear itself cannot be considered a science, it is certainly a

technique.

The most striking feature of the world we live in is that most of its inhabitants—with the exception of pietists of various kinds—are cut off from the future. Life has no validity unless it can project itself toward the future, can ripen and progress. Living against a wall is a dog's life. True—and the men of my generation, those who are going into the factories and the colleges, have lived and are living more and more like dogs.

This is not the first time, of

course, that men have confronted a future materially closed to them. But hitherto they have been able to transcend the dilemma by words, by protests, by appealing to other values which lent them hope. To-day no one speaks any more (except those who repeat themselves) because history seems to be in the grip of blind and deaf forces which will heed neither cries of warning, nor advice, nor entreaties. The years we have just gone through have killed something in us. And that something is simply the old confidence man had in himself, which led him to believe that he could always elicit human reactions from another man if he spoke to him in the language of a common humanity. We have seen men lie, degrade, kill, deport, torture—and each time it was not possible to persuade them not to do these things because they were sure of themselves and because one cannot appeal to an abstraction, i.e., the representative of an ideology.

Mankind's long dialogue has just come to an end. And naturally a man with whom one cannot reason is a man to be feared. The result is that—besides those who have not spoken out because they thought it useless—a vast conspiracy of silence has spread all about us, a conspiracy accepted by those who are frightened and who rationalize their fears in order to hide them from themselves, a conspiracy fostered by those whose interest it is to do so. "You shouldn't talk about the Russian culture purge—it helps reaction." "Don't mention the Anglo-American support of Franco—it encourages communism." Fear is certainly a technique.

What with the general fear of a war now being prepared by all nations and the specific fear of murderous ideologies, who can deny that we live in a state of terror? We live in terror because persua-

sion is no longer possible; because man has been wholly submerged in History; because he can no longer tap that part of his nature, as real as the historical part, which he recaptures in contemplating the beauty of nature and of human faces; because we live in a world of abstractions, of bureaux and machines, of absolute ideas and of crude messianism. We suffocate among people who think they are absolutely right, whether in their machines or in their ideas. And for all who can live only in an atmosphere of human dialogue and sociability, this silence is the end of the world.

To emerge from this terror, we must be able to reflect and to act accordingly. But an atmosphere of terror hardly encourages reflection. I believe, however, that instead of simply blaming everything on this fear, we should consider it as one of the basic factors in the situation, and try to do something about it. No task is more important. For it involves the fate of a considerable number of Europeans who, fed up with the lies and violence, deceived in their dearest hopes and repelled by the idea of killing their fellow-men in order to convince them, likewise repudiate the idea of themselves being convinced that way. And yet such is the alternative that at present confronts so many of us in Europe who are not of any party—or ill at ease in the party we have chosen—who doubt socialism has been realized in Russia or liberalism in America, who grant to each side the right to affirm its truth but refuse it the right to impose it by murder, individual or collective. Among the powerful of to-day, these are the men without a kingdom. Their viewpoint will not be recognized (and I say "be recognized," not "triumph"), nor will they recover their kingdom until they come to know precisely what they want and proclaim it directly

and boldly enough to make their words a stimulus to action. And if an atmosphere of fear does not encourage accurate thinking, then they must first of all come to terms with fear.

To come to terms, one must understand what fear means: what it implies and what it rejects. It implies and rejects the same fact: a world where murder is legitimate, and where human life is considered trifling. This is the great political question of our times, and before dealing with other issues, one must take a position on it. Before anything can be done, two questions must be put: "Do you or do you not, directly or indirectly, want to be killed or assaulted? Do you or do you not, directly or indirectly, want to kill or assault?" All who say No to both these questions are automatically committed to a series of consequences which must modify their way of posing the problem. My aim here is to clarify two or three of these consequences.

§

I once said that, after the experiences of the last two years, I could no longer hold to any truth which might oblige me, directly or indirectly, to demand a man's life. Certain friends whom I respected retorted that I was living in Utopia, that there was no political truth which could not one day reduce us to such an extremity, and that we must therefore either run the risk of this extremity or else simply put up with the world as it is.

They argued the point most forcefully. But I think they were able to put such force into it only because they were unable to really *imagine* other people's death. It is a freak of the times. We make love by telephone, we work not on matter but on machines, and we kill and are killed by proxy. We gain in cleanliness, but lose in understanding.

But the argument has another,

indirect meaning: it poses the question of Utopia. People like myself want, not a world in which murder no longer exists (we are not so crazy as that!) but rather one in which murder is not legitimate. Here indeed we are Utopian—and contradictory. For we do live, it is true, in a world where murder is legitimate, and we ought to change it if we do not like it. But it appears that we cannot change it without risking murder. Murder thus throws us back on murder, and we will continue to live in terror whether we accept the fact with resignation or wish to abolish it by means which merely replace one terror with another.

It seems to me every one should think this over. For what strikes me, in the midst of polemics, threats and outbursts of violence, is the fundamental good will of every one. From Right to Left, every one, with the exception of a few swindlers, believes that his particular truth is the one to make men happy. And yet the combination of all these good intentions has produced the present infernal world, where men are killed, threatened and deported, where war is prepared, where one cannot speak freely without being insulted or betrayed. Thus if people like ourselves live in a state of contradiction, we are not the only ones, and those who accuse us of Utopianism are possibly themselves also living in a Utopia, a different one but perhaps a more costly one in the end.

Let us, then, admit that our refusal to legitimize murder forces us to reconsider our whole idea of Utopia. This much seems clear: Utopia is whatever is in contradiction with reality. From this standpoint, it would be completely Utopian to wish that men should no longer kill each other. That would be absolute Utopia. But a much sounder Utopia is that which insists that murder be no longer legiti-

mized. Indeed, the Marxian and the capitalist ideologies, both based on the idea of progress, both certain that the application of their principles must inevitably bring about a harmonious society, are Utopian to a much greater degree. Furthermore, they are both at the moment costing us dearly.

We may therefore conclude, practically, that in the next few years the struggle will be not between the forces of Utopia and the forces of reality, but between different Utopias which are attempting to be born into reality. It will be simply a matter of choosing the least costly among them. I am convinced that we can no longer reasonably hope to save everything, but that we can at least propose to save our skins, so that a future, if not *the* future, remains a possibility.

Thus (1) to refuse to sanction murder is no more Utopian than the "realistic" ideologies of our day, and (2) the whole point is whether these latter are more or less costly. It may, therefore, be useful to try to define, in Utopian terms, the conditions which are needed to bring about the pacification of men and nations. This line of thought, assuming it is carried on without fear and without pretensions, may help to create the preconditions for clear thinking and a provisional agreement between men who want to be neither victims nor executioners. In what follows, the attempt will be not to work out a complete position, but simply to correct some current misconceptions and to pose the question of Utopia as accurately as possible. The attempt, in short, will be to define the conditions for a political position that is modest—i.e. free of messianism and disencumbered of nostalgia for an earthly paradise.

§

If we agree that we have lived for ten years in a state of terror and still so live, and that this terror is

^{the} our chief source of ^{our} anxiety, then we must see what we can oppose to this terror. Which brings up the question of socialism. For terror is legitimized only if we assent to the principle: "the end justifies the means." And this principle in turn may be accepted only if the effectiveness of an action is posed as an absolute end, as in nihilistic ideologies (anything goes, success is the only thing worth talking about), or in those philosophies which make History an absolute end (Hegel, followed by Marx: the end being a classless society, everything is good that leads to it).

Such is the problem confronting French Socialists, for example. They are bothered by scruples. Violence and oppression, of which they had hitherto only a theoretical idea, they have now seen at first hand. And they have had to ask themselves whether, as their philosophy requires, they would consent to use that violence themselves, even as a temporary expedient and for a quite different end. The author of a recent preface to Saint-Just, speaking of men of an earlier age who had similar scruples, wrote contemptuously: "They recoiled in the face of horrors." True enough. And so they deserved to be despised by strong, superior spirits who could live among horrors without flinching. But all the same, they gave a voice to the agonized appeal of commonplace spirits like ourselves, the millions who constitute the raw material of History and who must some day be taken into account, despite all contempt.

A more important task, I think, is to try to understand the state of contradiction and confusion in which our Socialists now exist. We have not thought enough about the moral crisis of French Socialism, as expressed, for example in a recent party congress. It is clear that our Socialists, under the influence of Leon Blum and even more

under the pressure of events, have preoccupied themselves much more with moral questions (the end does not justify all means) than in the past. Quite properly, they wanted to base themselves on principles which rise superior to murder. It is also clear that these same Socialists want to preserve Marxian doctrine, some because they think one cannot be revolutionary without being Marxist, others, by fidelity to party tradition, which tells them that one cannot be socialist without being Marxist. The chief task of the last party congress was to reconcile the desire for a morality superior to murder with the determination to remain faithful to Marxism. But one cannot reconcile what is irreconcilable.

For if it is clear that Marxism is true and there is logic in History, then political realism is legitimate. It is equally clear that if the moral values extolled by the Socialist Party are legitimate, then Marxism is absolutely false since it claims to be absolutely true. From this point of view, the famous "going beyond" Marxism in an idealistic and humanitarian direction is a joke and an idle dream. It is impossible to "go beyond" Marx, for he himself carried his thought to its extreme logical consequences. The Communists have a solid logical basis for using the lies and the violence which the Socialists reject, and the basis is that very dialectic which the Socialists want to preserve. It is therefore hardly surprising that the Socialist congress ended by simply putting forward simultaneously two contradictory positions—a conclusion whose sterility appears in the results of the recent elections.

This way, confusion will never end. A choice was necessary, and the Socialists would not or could not choose.

I have chosen this example not to score off the Socialists but to illustrate the paradoxes among which

we live. To score off the Socialists, one would have to be superior to them. This is not yet the case. On the contrary, I think this contradiction is common to all those of whom I speak, those who want a society which we can both enjoy and respect; those who want men to be both free and just, but who hesitate between a freedom in which they know justice is finally betrayed and a justice in which they see freedom suppressed from the first. Those who know *What Is To Be Done* or *What Is To Be Thought* make fun of this intolerable anguish. But I think it would be better, instead of jeering at it, to try to understand and clarify this anguish, see what it means, interpret its quasi-total rejection of a world which provokes it, and trace out the feeble hope that suffuses it.

A hope that is grounded precisely in this contradiction, since it forces—or will force—the Socialists to make a choice. They will either admit that the end justifies the means, in which case murder can be legitimized; or else, they will reject Marxism as an absolute philosophy, confining themselves to its critical aspect, which is often valuable. If they choose the first, their moral crisis will be ended, and their position will be unambiguous. If the second, they will exemplify the way our period marks the end of ideologies, that is, of absolute Utopias which destroy themselves, in History, by the price they ultimately exact. It will then be necessary to choose a most modest and less costly Utopia. At least it is in these terms that the refusal to legitimize murder forces us to pose the problem.

Yes, that is the question we must put, and no one, I think, will venture to answer it lightly.

§

Since August, 1944, everybody talks about revolution, and quite

sincerely too. But sincerity is not in itself a virtue: some kinds are so confused that they are worse than lies. Not the language of the heart but merely that of clear thinking is what we need to-day. Ideally, a revolution is a change in political and economic institutions in order to introduce more freedom and justice; practically, it is a complex of historical events, often undesirable ones, which brings about this happy transformation.

Can one say that we use this word to-day in its classical sense? When people nowadays hear the word, "revolution," they think of a change in property relations (generally collectivisation) which may be brought about either by majority legislation or by a minority coup.

This concept obviously lacks meaning in present historical circumstances. For one thing, the violent seizure of power is a romantic idea which the perfection of armaments has made illusory. Since the repressive apparatus of a modern State commands tanks and airplanes, tanks and airplanes are needed to counter it. 1789 and 1917 are still historic dates, but they are no longer historic examples.

And even assuming this conquest of power were possible, by violence or by law, it would be effective only if France (or Italy or Czechoslovakia) could be put into parentheses and isolated from the rest of the world. For, in the actual historical situation of 1948, a change in our own property system would involve, to give only one example, such consequences to our American credits that our economy would be threatened with ruin. A rightwing coup would be no more successful, because of Russia with her millions of French Communist voters and her position as the dominant continental power. The truth is—excuse me for stating openly what every one knows and no one says—the truth is that we

French are not free to make a revolution. Or at least that we can be no longer revolutionary all by ourselves, since there no longer exists any policy, conservative or socialist, which can operate exclusively within a national framework.

Thus we can only speak of world revolution. The revolution will be made on a world scale or it will not be made at all. But what meaning does this expression still retain? There was a time when it was thought that international reform would be brought about by the conjunction or the synchronization of a number of national revolutions—a kind of totting-up of miracles. But to-day one can conceive only the extension of a revolution that has already succeeded. This is something Stalin has very well understood, and it is the kindest explanation of his policies (the other being to refuse Russia the right to speak in the name of revolution).

This viewpoint boils down to conceiving of Europe and the West as a single nation in which a powerful and well-armed minority is struggling to take power. But if the conservative forces—in this case, the U.S.A.—are equally well armed, clearly the idea of revolution is replaced by that of ideological warfare. More precisely, world revolution to-day involves a very great danger of war. Every future revolution will be a foreign revolution. It will begin with a military occupation—or, what comes to the same thing, the blackmail threat of one. And it will become significant only when the occupying power has conquered the rest of the world.

Inside national boundaries, revolutions have already been costly enough—a cost that has been accepted because of the progress they are assumed to bring. To-day, the costs of a world war must be weighed against the progress that may be hoped for from either Russia or America gaining world power.

And I think it of first importance that such a balance be struck, and that for once we use a little imagination about what this globe, where already thirty million fresh corpses lie, will be like after a cataclysm which will cost us ten times as many.

Note that this is a truly objective approach, taking account only of reality without bringing in ideological or sentimental considerations. It should give pause to those who talk lightly of revolution. The *present-day* content of this word must be accepted or rejected as a whole. If it be accepted, then one must recognize a conscious responsibility for the coming war. If rejected, then one must either come out for the status quo—which is a mood of absolute Utopia in so far as it assumes the “freezing” of history—or else give a new content to the word “revolution,” which means assenting to what might be called relative Utopia. Those who want to change the world must, it seems to me, now choose between the charnel-house threatened by the impossible dream of history suddenly struck motionless, and the acceptance of a relative Utopia which gives some leeway to action and to mankind. Relative Utopia is the only realistic choice; it is our last frail hope of saving our skins.

§

We know to-day that there are no more islands, that frontiers are just lines on a map. We know that in a steadily accelerating world, where the Atlantic is crossed in less than a day and Moscow speaks to Washington in a few minutes, we are forced into fraternity—or complicity. The forties have taught us that an injury done a student in Prague strikes down simultaneously a worker in Clichy, that blood shed on the banks of a Central European river brings a Texas farmer to spill his own blood in the Ardennes,

which he sees for the first time. There is no suffering, no torture anywhere in the world which does not affect our everyday lives.

Many Americans would like to go on living closed off in their own society, which they find good. Many Russians perhaps would like to carry on their Statist experiment holding aloof from the capitalist world. They cannot do so, nor will they ever again be able to do so. Likewise, no economic problem, however minor it appears, can be solved outside the comity of nations. Europe's bread is in Buenos Aires, Siberian machine-tools are made in Detroit. To-day, tragedy is collective.

We know, then, without shadow of a doubt that the new order we seek cannot be merely national, or even continental; certainly not occidental nor oriental. It must be universal. No longer can we hope for anything from partial solutions or concessions. We are living in a state of compromise, i.e., anguish to-day and murder to-morrow. And all the while the pace of history and the world is accelerating. The twenty-one deaf men, the war criminals of to-morrow, who to-day negotiate the peace carry on their monotonous conversations placidly seated in an express-train which bears them toward the abyss at a thousand miles an hour.

What are the methods by which this world unity may be achieved, this international revolution realized in which the resources of men, of raw materials, of commercial markets and cultural riches may be better distributed? I see only two, and these two between them define our ultimate alternative.

The world can be united from above, by a single State more powerful than the others. The U.S.S.R. or the U.S.A. could do it. I have nothing to say to the claim that they could rule and remodel the world in the image of their own

society. As a Frenchman, and still more as a Mediterranean, I find the idea repellent. But I do not insist on this sentimental argument. My only objection is that this unification could not be accomplished without war—or at least without serious risk of war. I will even grant what I do not believe: that it would not be an atomic war. The fact remains, nevertheless, that the coming war will leave humanity so mutilated and impoverished that the very idea of law and order will become anachronistic. Marx could justify, as he did, the war of 1870 for it was a provincial war fought with Chassepot rifles. In the Marxian perspective, a hundred thousand corpses are nothing if they are the price of the happiness of hundreds of millions of men. But the sure death of millions of men for the hypothetical happiness of the survivors seems too high a price to pay: The dizzy rate at which weapons have evolved, a historical fact ignored by Marx, forces us to raise anew the whole question of means and ends. And in this instance, the means can leave us little doubt about the end. Whatever the desired end, however lofty and necessary, whether happiness or justice or liberty—the means employed to attain it represent so enormous a risk and are so disproportionate to the slender hopes of success, that, in all sober objectivity, we must refuse to run this risk.

This leaves us only the alternative method of achieving a world order: the mutual agreement of all parties. This agreement has a name: international democracy. Of course every one talks about the U.N. But what is international democracy? It is a democracy which is international. (The truism will perhaps be excused, since the most self-evident truths are also the ones most frequently distorted.) International—or national—democracy is a form of society in which law has authority

over those governed, law being the expression of the common will as expressed in a legislative body. An international legal code is indeed now being prepared. But this code is made and broken by governments, that is by the executive power. We are thus faced with a regime of international dictatorship. The only way of extricating ourselves is to create a world parliament through elections in which all peoples will participate, which will enact legislation which will exercise authority over national governments. Since we do not have such a parliament, all we can do now is to resist international dictatorship; to resist on a world scale; and to resist by means which are not in contradiction with the end we seek.

§

As every one knows, political thought to-day lags more and more behind events. Thus the French fought the 1914 war with 1870 methods, and the 1939 war with 1918 methods. Antiquated thinking is not, however, a French speciality. We need only recall that the future of the world is being shaped by liberal-capitalist principles developed in the eighteenth century and by "scientific socialist" principles developed in the nineteenth. Systems of thought which, in the former case, date from the early years of modern industrialism, and, in the latter, from the age of Darwinism and of Renanian optimism, now propose to master the age of the atomic bomb, of sudden mutations, and of nihilism.

It is true that consciousness is always lagging behind reality: History rushes onward while thought reflects. But this inevitable backwardness becomes more pronounced the faster History speeds up. The world has changed more in the past fifty years than it did in the previous two hundred. Thus we see nations quarrelling over frontiers when every one knows

that to-day frontiers are mere abstractions. Nationalism was, to all appearances, the dominant note at the Conference of the twenty-one.

To-day we concentrate our political thinking on the German problem, which is a secondary problem compared to the clash of empires which threatens us. But if to-morrow we resolve the Russo-American conflict, we may see ourselves once more outdistanced. Already the clash of empires is in process of becoming secondary to the clash of civilizations. Everywhere the colonial peoples are asserting themselves. Perhaps in ten years, perhaps in fifty, the dominance of Western civilization itself will be called into question. We might as well recognize this now, and admit these civilizations into the world parliament, so that its code of law may become truly universal, and a universal order be established.

The veto issue in the U.N. to-day is a false issue because the conflicting majorities and minorities are false. The U.S.S.R. will always have the right to reject majority rule so long as it is a majority of ministers and not a majority of peoples, all peoples, represented by their delegates. Once such a majority comes into being, then each nation must obey it or else reject its law—that is, openly proclaim its will to dominate. . . .

To reply once more and finally to the accusation of Utopia: for us, the choice is simple—Utopia or the war now being prepared by antiquated modes of thought. . . . Sceptical though we are (and as I am), realism forces us to this Utopian alternative. When our Utopia has become part of history, as with many others of like kind, men will find themselves unable to conceive reality without it. For history is simply man's desperate effort to give body to his most clairvoyant dreams.

§

All contemporary political thinking which refuses to justify lies and murder is led to the following conclusions: (1) domestic policy is in itself a secondary matter; (2) the only problem is the creation of a world order which will bring about those lasting reforms which are the distinguishing mark of a revolution; (3) within any given nation there exist now only administrative problems, to be solved provisionally after a fashion, until a solution is worked out which will be more effective because more general.

For example, the French Constitution can only be evaluated in terms of the support it gives or fails to give to a world order based on justice and the free exchange of ideas. From this viewpoint, we must criticise the indifference of our Constitution to the simplest human liberties. And we must also recognize that the problem of restoring the food supply is ten times more important than such issues as nationalization or election figures. Nationalization will not work in a single country. And although the food supply cannot be assured either within a single country, it is a more pressing problem and calls for expedients, provisional though they may be.

And so this viewpoint gives us a hitherto lacking criterion by which to judge domestic policy. Thirty editorials in *L'Aube* may range themselves every month against thirty in *Humanité*, but they will not cause us to forget that both newspapers, together with the parties they represent, have acquiesced in the annexation without a referendum of Briga and Tenda, and that they are thus accomplices in the destruction of international democracy. Regardless of their good or bad intentions, M. Bidault and M. Thorez are both in favour of international dictatorship. From this aspect, whatever other opinion one

may have of them, they represent in our politics not realism but the most disastrous kind of Utopianism.

Yes, we must minimize domestic politics. A crisis which tears the whole world apart must be met on a world scale. A social system for everybody which will somewhat allay each one's misery and fear is to-day our logical objective. But that calls for action and for sacrifices, that is, for men. And if there are many to-day who, in their secret hearts, detest violence and killing, there are not many who care to recognize that this forces them to reconsider their actions and thoughts. Those who want to make such an effort, however, will find in such a social system a rational hope and a guide to action.

They will admit that little is to be expected from present-day governments, since these live and act according to a murderous code. Hope remains only in the most difficult task of all: to reconsider everything from the ground up, so as to shape a living society inside a dying society. Men must therefore, as individuals, draw up among themselves, within frontiers and across them, a new social contract which will unite them according to more reasonable principles.

The peace movement I speak of could base itself, inside nations, on work-communities and, internationally, on intellectual communities; the former, organized co-operatively, would help as many individuals as possible to solve their material problems, while the latter would try to define the values by which this international community would live, and would also plead its cause on every occasion.

More precisely, the latter's task would be to speak out clearly against the confusions of the Terror and at the same time to define the values by which a peaceful world may live. The first objectives might be the drawing up of an inter-

national code of justice whose Article No. 1 would be the abolition of the death penalty, and an exposition of the basic principles of a civilization which talks things out (*civilisation du dialogue*). Such an undertaking would answer the needs of an era which has found no philosophical justification for that thirst for fraternity which to-day burns in Western man. There is no idea, naturally, of constructing a new ideology, but rather of discovering a style of life.

Let us suppose that certain individuals resolve that they will consistently oppose to power the force of example; to authority, exhortation; to insult, friendly reasoning; to trickery, simple honour. Let us suppose they refuse all the advantages of present-day society and accept only the duties and obligations which bind them to other men. Let us suppose they devote themselves to orienting education, the press and public opinion toward the principles outlined here. Then I say that such men would be acting not as Utopians but as honest realists. They would be preparing the future and at the same time knocking down a few of the walls which imprison us to-day. If realism be the art of taking into account both the present and the future, of gaining the most while sacrificing the least, then who can fail to see the positively dazzling realism of such behaviour?

Whether these men will arise or not I do not know. It is probable that most of them are even now thinking things over, and that is good. But one thing is sure: their efforts will be effective only to the degree they have the courage to give up, for the present, some of their dreams, so as to grasp the more firmly the essential point on which our very lives depend. Once there, it will perhaps turn out to be necessary, before they are done, to raise their voices.

Yes, we must raise our voices. Up to this point, I have refrained from appealing to emotion. We are being torn apart by a logic of History which we have elaborated in every detail—a net which threatens to strangle us. It is not emotion which can cut through the web of a logic which has gone to irrational lengths, but only reason which can meet logic on its own ground. But I should not want to leave the impression, in concluding, that any programme for the future can get along without our powers of love and indignation. I am well aware that it takes a powerful prime mover to get men into motion and that it is hard to throw one's self into a struggle whose objectives are so modest and where hope has only a rational basis—and hardly even that. But the problem is not how to carry men away; it is essential, on the contrary, that they not be carried away but rather that they be made to understand clearly what they are doing.

To save what can be saved so as to open up some kind of future—that is the prime mover, the passion and the sacrifice that is required. It demands only that we reflect and then decide, clearly, whether humanity's lot must be made still more miserable in order to achieve far-off and shadowy ends, whether we should accept a world bristling with arms where brother kills brother; or whether, on the contrary, we should avoid bloodshed and misery as much as possible so that we give a chance for survival to later generations better equipped than we are.

For my part, I am fairly sure that I have made the choice. And, having chosen, I think that I must speak out, that I must state that I will never again be one of those, whoever they be, who compromise with murder, and that I must take the consequences of such a decision.

The thing is done, and that is as far as I can go at present. Before concluding, however, I want to make clear the spirit in which these articles are written.

We are asked to love or to hate such and such a country and such and such a people. But some of us feel too strongly our common humanity to make such a choice. Those who really love the Russian people, in gratitude for what they have never ceased to be—that world leaven which Tolstoy and Gorky speak of—do not wish for them success in power-politics, but rather want to spare them, after the ordeals of the past, a new and even more terrible bloodletting. So, too, with the American people, and with the peoples of unhappy Europe. This is the kind of elementary truth we are liable to forget amidst the furious passions of our time.

Yes, it is fear and silence and the spiritual isolation they cause that must be fought to-day. And it is *le dialogue*, and the universal inter-communication of men that must be defended. Slavery, injustice and lies destroy this intercourse and forbid this sociability; and so we must reject them. But these evils are to-day the very stuff of History, so that many consider them necessary evils. It is true that we cannot "escape History," since we are in it up to our necks. But one may propose to fight within History to preserve from History that part of man which is not its proper province. That is all I have tried to say here. The "point" may be summed up as follows:

Modern nations are driven by powerful forces along the roads of power and domination. I will not say that these forces should be furthered or that they should be obstructed. They hardly need our help and, for the moment, they laugh at attempts to hinder them. They will, then, continue. But I will ask only this simple question: what

if these forces wind up in a dead end, what if that logic of History on which so many now rely turns out to be a will o' the wisp? What if, despite two or three world wars, despite the sacrifice of several generations and a whole system of values, our grandchildren—supposing they survive—find themselves no closer to a world society? It may well be that the survivors of such an experience will be too weak to understand their own sufferings. Since these forces are working themselves out and since it is inevitable that they continue to do so, there is no reason why some of us should not take on the job of keeping alive, through the apocalyptic historical vista that stretches before us, a modest thoughtfulness which, without pretending to solve everything, will constantly be prepared to give some human meaning to everyday life. The essential thing is that people should carefully weigh the price they must pay.

To conclude: all I ask is that, in

the midst of a murderous world, we agree to reflect on murder and to make a choice. After that, we can distinguish those who accept the consequences of being murderers themselves or the accomplices of murderers, and those who refuse to do so with all their force and being. Since this terrible dividing-line does actually exist, it will be a gain if it be clearly marked. Over the expanse of five continents throughout the coming years an endless struggle is going to be pursued between violence and friendly persuasion, a struggle in which, granted, the former has a thousand times the chances of success than that of the latter. But I have always held that, if he who bases his hopes on human nature is a fool, he who gives up in the face of circumstances is a coward. And henceforth, the only honourable course will be to stake everything on a formidable gamble: that words are more powerful than munitions.

(Translated by Dwight Macdonald)

The Sleeping Girl

translated from the French of Paul Valéry by Roy Porter

What secrets in her heart is my young lover burning,
A soul breathing a flower through the body's fashion?
From what poor elements can her simple passion
Figure this radiance from a woman sleeping?

Dreams, silence, unconquerable calmness, breathing,
Peace stronger than a tear, here is your possession,
The deep wave of full sleep and its broad completion
In the breast of such an enemy uniting.

O sleeper, abandoned mass of golden shadow,
Your terrible rest is fired by such a glow,
Dear girl with your long langour and clustered charm,

That though the soul's away, with work in hell to do,
Your form your pure womb draped by a flowing arm,
Watches; your form is watching, and my eyes watch too.

The Problem of Pascal

F. McEACHRAN

There is an anecdote told by Montaigne about himself which may throw some light on the difference between his thought and that of Pascal, his greatest disciple and critic. Once at a ball Montaigne was observed to have stopped dancing and to be deep in meditation. His friends thought he was suffering from a fit of jealousy and asked him later what had so distracted him. It was not jealousy, but something quite different. He had suddenly remembered that a friend of his, recently attending a similar dance, had returned home only to die the same night.

It is this sort of anecdote appearing from time to time in the *Essais* which reveals the hidden depth of Montaigne's mind and the gravity of his interests. But it is none the less true that when at the end of his long spiritual Odyssey he sums up his conclusions, it is to life and not to death that he pays the fuller tribute. "C'est une entière suffisance et comme divine" he says in a well-known passage, "que de savoir jouir pleinement de son être." The art of living is to him both the highest and the hardest and some of the greatest men have not succeeded at it; and the point of the anecdote is to stress the fact that when we turn to Blaise Pascal, who was perhaps more directly influenced by Montaigne than any other modern writer (not excluding Shakespeare and Nietzsche), we find this tribute completely reversed and death not life advanced as the end. Indeed, some of Pascal's dicta about the death that comes to all are so terrifying that one wonders how a sane man and a great scientist could have uttered them. Pascal's vision of man's destiny, unlike that of mystical writers such as Dante, St. Paul, St. Augustine,

is hardly adequate to compensate for the horrors of his conception of life, and stresses the miseries of our human bondage to such an extent that it culminates in a feeling of total helplessness. "The last act is tragic," says Pascal in No. 210 of the *Pensées*,* "however happy the rest of the play may be: at the last they throw a little earth upon our head and it is all up for ever." Or again: "It is a horrible thing to feel all we possess slipping away" (212), or again: "We are fools to depend upon the society of our fellow-men. Wretched as we are, powerless as we are, they will not aid us; we shall die alone" (211). His marvellous analysis of the misery of man, of the "natural poverty of our feeble and mortal condition, so miserable that nothing can comfort us when we think of it closely" (139) is not compensated by what he has to say about Jesus who is nearly always presented in an atmosphere of torture: "Jesus will be in agony until the end of the world: you mustn't go to sleep during that time" (552). Or again: "It is good to be tired and wearied by the *vain search for truth*, that we may stretch out our arms to the Redeemer" (422). It is possible that this is a key passage for the understanding of Pascal. It links up his love of Jesus with the search for truth on which, as a scientist, he spent a large part of his short life and which in the end may have wrecked his nervous constitution.

Pascal, besides being a religious reformer renouncing the world, was also a great scientist blessing it; and in both directions he achieved greatness. As a boy of twelve he reconstructed the thirty-second proposition of Euclid almost by his own

**Pensées*: Blaise Pascal, translated by W. F. Trotter (*Everyman* edition).

unaided efforts, and at sixteen composed a work on conic sections which drew the attention of Descartes and Leibniz, while his other achievements in mathematics (law of probabilities, the cycloid, etc.) are equally well-known. In addition to the mathematical investigations so typical of the abstract Cartesian age, he was distinguished by an empirical approach to nature rare in the seventeenth century. In order to help his father, who was *intendant* at Rouen, he invented an arithmetical machine which was the first of its kind and later, shortly before his death (that is, in his most religious period), he originated the first omnibus service in Paris. He even developed the philosophy of science (to the discomfiture of the Jesuits) by showing that contrary to the rules of Aristotle, nature not only had no horror of but positively liked a vacuum. He drew from this the conclusion that while authority was an excellent thing in religion, it was not a good thing in science, an argument which stood him in good service when later he criticised the innovations made by the Jesuits in casuistry (in *Lettres écrites à un provincial*).

So much for Pascal the rationalist and empiricist. There was also Pascal the *honnête homme*, or French "gentleman" in the sense given to that word in the seventeenth century. During a short period of his life Pascal the scientist and mathematician spent a good deal of time in the company of various men of society, the Duc de Roannez, M. de Méré and M. Miton, who seem to have been amused at his rather gauche observations about men and society. Pascal, for his part, seems to have observed his society friends carefully and to have learnt from their behaviour what men of the world were and what was the nature of the *honnête homme*: de Méré, be it

remembered, had written a sort of manual of etiquette for his generation, while Miton, a sceptic, who probably taught Pascal how to gamble, was a well-known *libertin*, or free-thinker. From his intercourse with these completely non-religious people and their entourage Pascal drew his famous distinction between *esprit de finesse* and *esprit de géométrie*. In the first section of the *Pensées* as now published in the Brunshvicg edition, Pascal elaborates the theme that the "geometrical" mind is that which "conceives" and "deduces" and is the basis of all valid thinking once the premises have been granted. It is used in mathematics, logic and the abstract sciences. The *esprit de finesse* on the other hand is the faculty of "seeing clearly," of perceiving "form" in art, of grasping a multitude of principles at once as they unite in some concrete object. It is used in social etiquette, in art, in understanding people. Last of all, it is used in religion. The person who possesses this *esprit de finesse* to a high degree, this "clear sight," is the *honnête homme* as Pascal conceives him, whose characteristic seems to be a capacity to evaluate by intuition in the absence of any kind of expert knowledge. La Bruyère in his *Caractères* says: "L'honnête homme ne se pique de rien", and it would seem that the non-expert ideal of the *honnête homme* which goes back to Montaigne, has a close connection with the *esprit de finesse*. Pascal does not discuss the case where these two faculties are combined in a single individual; but the *esprit de finesse*, by virtue of its close connection with the non-rational side of man, undoubtedly contributed more to Pascal's later religious point of view: "When we see a natural style, we are astonished and delighted: for we expected to see an author, and we find a man" (29).

In the end it is not the author who is converted to religion, nor the scientist, nor the mathematician, but the man himself. The importance of these earlier thoughts of Pascal, which seem to some people to have little connection with the religious theme, is that they show him digging down to ever greater depths of the human personality. There is then the rational and empirical Pascal and there is also the Pascal who enjoyed the acquaintanceship of de Méré and Miton, and even learned from them. How did the third and greater Pascal, the Pascal of the tragic view of life arise out of these antecedents?

It is true, of course, that the Pascal family had been pious even before the contact with Jansenism, and it is worth noting in this connection that Pascal's grandfather on his father's side had been influenced by Calvinism. The family, however, had never found difficulty in keeping scientific interests and religious feeling in separate compartments and was in no sense aware of any contradiction. In fact, as we have seen, Pascal's objection to the Jesuits was that they were prone to reverse the natural order of events by insisting on authority in science while yet innovating (as he thought) in religion. Even after the "first" conversion as it is called, in 1646, when two Jansenist medical men tended Pascal's father who had dislocated his thigh on the ice, the deeper piety which ensued seems to have made no difference to Pascal's scientific pursuits. It was with the second conversion in 1654, when for some two hours he felt he was standing in the presence of God, that the decisive change came, and even that did not put an end entirely to his scientific research. But certainly we can say that from 1654 onward Pascal experienced the tragic view of life from a most uncompromising point of view.

Constant illness brought on by the overwork of his childhood, polemics against the Jesuits on account of their lax morality, self-torture owing to the life of asceticism which he imposed upon himself, all contributed to his early death in 1662 at the age of 39. It was in the last year of this period that he wrote down the terrible statements about human destiny which make so profound an impression when we read the *Pensées to-day*. Friedrich Nietzsche, who tells us that he "loved" Pascal, asserts that if ever a person literally killed himself by inches it was Pascal; and he never forgave the Christian religion for having thus indirectly brought about his death. In his last year Pascal had one "clear vision" and only one, and that was the perception of God. That and nothing more. That is what the *esprit de finesse* had brought him to in the end.

It must not be forgotten that Pascal was a great Bible student and that his *Pensées* contain a number of translations from Holy Writ of the highest merit. All in all we may even say that his *Pensées* themselves are sufficiently imbued with Biblical style and imagery to be the nearest equivalent the French have to the English Authorised Version. Now Pascal not only took the Bible seriously but his attitude towards it was severely empirical; he read it as factual, including the miracles; and he inferred certain conclusions. For example, in *Deuteronomy XXX, 19*, we are told that man by his free will must make a choice between life and death and that there is no third alternative. Pascal, like St. Paul and Augustine, draws an important inference from this. Again, he notes that Jesus reproaches the Jews not for not believing his statements in and for themselves, but for not believing them when supported by the evidence of his miracles. The empirical attitude is preserved in the qualifi-

cation that we should definitely not believe in all miracles: some are to be believed in and some not. But the one great empirical fact that Pascal "inducts" from the Bible is his conception of a *Deus absconditus* (Isaiah XLV, 15), a hidden deity, and of a human nature which is fallen, a point of view which fits in exactly with his other empirical observations of men around him here and now. God reveals himself but only partly. Man is fallen but not irretrievably. The corollary is that some (not all) may yet know God face to face. You can't "prove" this by the operations of the *esprit de géométrie*; it is not a conclusion of formal logic. But you can perceive it by means of *esprit de finesse* and your sense of conviction will be well-founded.

Pascal further observes that this dualism runs right through the Bible, and that always only a minority is chosen. First the Jews are chosen (a small and unknown race) and chosen almost at the beginning of the world. Among them various leading personalities are chosen (some of them "types" of the coming Messiah): Abraham, Noah, Moses and above all Joseph (767). Then the Christians are chosen, as St. Paul lays down, as against the Jews. And then among the Christians some are chosen and some rejected. There can be little doubt that, as in the minds of many other wrestlers with God, this matter of choice was the great mystery which confronted Pascal. Dante might spare a thought for the damnation of others, but for Pascal the issue was simply: was he of the elect or not? The climax of November 23rd, 1654, was undoubtedly the culmination of a long period of labour and tension issuing in the final explosive relief of the lines we find written on the parchment he sewed into his doublet. He knew then that he was "saved".

§

Thus the scientific, the humanistic and the religious Pascal culminate in the last, and the problem is narrowed down to the religious issue. The easiest way out is to accept the theory of a mystical Pascal who in the end rises above all worldly considerations. This may be the truth, but the analysis of mystical states is difficult and it does not seem on the face of it as though Pascal were a mystic as St. Teresa or St. Paul or even Dante were mystics. The rationalist and humanistic elements in his spiritual make-up were too strong; and he seems post-Reformation and modern in a sense which the others were not (despite the rational element in Dante). It is probable that only two men can be compared with Pascal in modern times, and both of them belong, curiously enough, to the nineteenth century. They are Kierkegaard and Nietzsche. Kierkegaard, on whose work I am not really competent to pronounce, had the same "existential" feeling that we find in Pascal, the same intense conviction of the significance of the religious issue which led Pascal to his famous disquisition on the "bet" for the conversion of the free thinker. Both too have the feeling of living in a largely irreligious world which has lost the meaning of existence, and both too are definitely Christians whose thought and teaching culminates in the Crucifixion of the Lord. But there the resemblance ends. Kierkegaard was not a scientist, nor a rationalist, nor an empiricist—hardly a humanist; he reminds us more of St. Francis of Assisi than of Pascal. He sees the kindness and gentleness of the world and delights in the small things of the senses in a way inconceivable to Pascal. The iron never entered into his soul as it entered into Pascal's.

Nietzsche, strange as it may seem, is likely to provide us with a

clue to the problem. He too came of a pious family and wrestled with ultimate problems as Pascal did. Although by no means a scientist in the strict sense, he was definitely an empiricist and humanist and his criticism of the great rationalist of his day, Hegel, was not dissimilar to Pascal's criticism of Descartes. "Le coeur a ses raisons que la raison ne connaît pas" might have been his maxim as it was that of Pascal. Like Pascal, Nietzsche was "converted" to his dualist point of view by a sudden mystical intuition and like him he divided mankind into sheep and goats, the "elect" and the "damned," the "supermen" and the "botched" or "bungled," with no half-way stage between. Both, in their respective ways, were religious reformers, both were artists and thinkers of the highest order, and both met with spiritual shipwreck. Pascal turned to the next world: "So I hold out my arms to my Redeemer—by his grace I await death in peace, in the hope of being eternally united to him" (736). Nietzsche turned to the future: "Man is something that must be overcome . . . Behold I proclaim to you the Superman—for all things are baptised at the well spring of eternity and beyond good and evil." Both were lonely men, writing the loneliest books, and both collapsed at an early age. (Pascal at 39, Nietzsche at 45.) And both the *Pensées* and *Zarathustra* are impregnated with the idiom of the Bible.

To most people to-day both Pascal and Nietzsche will seem abnormal, possibly insane, so remote from the pursuits of ordinary people are the pursuits of these men. Two subjects concerned Pascal, as they concerned Nietzsche, and they are the subjects common to all religious people, the problem of eternal life and of ultimate purification of the soul.

Pascal solved the problem in one way, Nietzsche in another: each was convinced he was right, and each exhausted himself in pursuit of certitude. The solutions found by both are religious, with an element of grim realism, which "accepts" and "blesses" the terror at the centre of reality. In Pascal this is the damnation of those who are not "chosen," the "vessels of wrath" of St. Paul; in Nietzsche it is the appalling fact that in eternity (*die ewige Wiederkehr*) not only the beautiful, but also the ugly, not only the noble, but also the mean, return for ever and ever. And both accept and "bless" this conjuncture. "All things are baptized at the well-spring of eternity" says Nietzsche, and "so I look forward with joy to meet my saviour at the end" says Pascal. They are reconciled to the terror.

One may say in conclusion that there is really no problem of Pascal (any more than there is a problem of Nietzsche) but only a problem of the ordinary man. However insane their answers, however incredible their conclusions, both men were, like Kierkegaard, saner than ourselves and much nearer the truth. They realised the existence of the problem, they asked the right questions, and they attempted an answer. The problem is (literally) that of eternity and of evil—expressed most clearly by Pascal in the famous argument of the bet, addressed to the ordinary worldly man of his day. In both cases the answer given, though terrifying, is immensely satisfying (like a tragic drama in the high style) in that it brings us nearer reality. As the twentieth century after Christ approaches its end and the tragedy with which it began rises to apocalyptic heights, the problem which beset Pascal and Nietzsche will surely beset us all. It is possible that a reading of the *Pensées* may help us to find our own answer.

Hellas and Byzantium

ANTON LOGORECI

One of the most insidious ravages of modern war is caused by propaganda. The effects of the cruder elements of wartime propaganda, like downright lies, are usually short-lived; it is the more subtle ingredients, such as half-truths, over-simplifications, romantic idealisations, etc., which go on working in people's minds long after they have been launched, distorting their judgment, obscuring their vision and in general paralysing their sense of reality. The necessity of political and economic reconstruction after a great war is overwhelming and therefore universally recognised. The discussion that has been going on in recent years about re-educating (or re-orientating) the Germans after Nazi experience has at least shown that people are becoming aware of the existence of other spheres of human activity, besides the economic and political, which are in need of rehabilitation. It is true that the Germans, after more than a decade of the most perverse despotic rule in history, are more urgently in need than anybody else of a new orientation in their lives—an orientation which may be guided from outside, but which must spring from the soil of Germany—but are we to conclude that re-orientation and the healthy process of the re-examination of cherished values and beliefs are to be confined to Germany, and that the rest of the world can concentrate with impunity on material reconstruction, after having passed through the furnace of one of the most revolutionary wars in history? That assumption would be very short-sighted and dangerous.

Some time ago *The Listener* published a letter which contained the following: "The modern

Greeks do not belong to the Eastern Mediterranean. Geographically they are near Asia, but that is where the connection ends. Their modes, ideas and thoughts are as Western as those of the English."

It was a Greek citizen protesting; his emphatic protest was evoked by a broadcast in which a British correspondent returning from Greece had urged his listeners not to judge Greek political affairs by British or Western standards, as these simply did not apply: with its historical background and peasant economy the country belonged to the Balkan or the East European tradition, and not to the Liberal tradition of the West.

The correspondent may not have been aware that what he was saying was sheer heresy, and that the Greek's protest, although rather naively and crudely put, contained the very substance of the orthodox doctrine which for over a century has identified modern Greece with the Hellas of the age of Socrates, Pericles and Plato. The classic Hellenic idea of Greece reached its climax during the Italo-Greek war of 1940-41 as a result of a vigorous propaganda conducted by Greek official agencies, with the powerful support of British Philhellenes. The main objectives of this campaign were to dissociate Greece from the political and cultural background of the Balkans, by trying to show that she is a true democracy, embodying the highest ideals of the classical age, and to enlist sympathy and support for the fulfilment of her national aspirations. The campaign was built around the heroic struggle of the Greek army against Fascist Italy, a struggle which was significantly linked up not with the nationalism of our own time, but with the ideals

which inspired the ancient Greeks in the struggle against the Persians.

The seeds of this propaganda were sown in immensely fertile ground in England, and thus bore abundant fruit. For many generations the ground had been assiduously cultivated by the Hellenist schools of Oxford and Cambridge, on whose benches the intellectual *élite* of Britain had learned to love the classics of Greek literature and philosophy. It is often said that every educated Englishman has two countries, England and France. Greece would take the place of France in the case of many cultured Englishmen. This cultivation of Hellenist studies led to the creation of a powerful Philhellenic movement which was mobilised so effectively in the twenties of the last century on behalf of the cause of the liberation of the Greek people from Ottoman rule. When the stream of the Romantic movement merged with the Philhellenic stream the result was the powerful torrent which swept through the hearts and minds of western Europe, and sent Byron to fight and die in Greece. All this rich and colourful background has conditioned the approach of British politicians and publicists to Greek affairs for many decades, and only the complicated intrigues of the German occupation and the subsequent conditions of civil war have somewhat shaken the foundations of this approach. What is needed now is a thorough re-examination of the historical, political, cultural and sentimental elements of the old approach, and the working out of a fresh realistic approach to the problems of a country whose importance has been increased enormously by the fact that its national frontiers have come to coincide with the frontiers of two world power blocs.

A romantic view of history has often led writers and publicists to find traces of enthusiastic Phil-

hellenism in George Canning's championship of the cause of Greek independence in the last century. Now it is perfectly true that Canning was aware of the existence of a great deal of sympathy and support among the British people for the freedom of Greece, and this may have helped him to pursue his Greek policy with greater ease and confidence, but there are no grounds to suppose that his own motives were tinged with any kind of enthusiasm. He was a cool-headed and realistic statesman whose chief concern was to maintain the balance of power in Europe by preventing at all costs a clash between Russia and Turkey over the question of Greece, a clash which he knew would end with the defeat of Turkey and the consequent upsetting of the cherished European balance, on which, he was convinced, the welfare of his country depended. He set about doing this by advising the Russians, on the one hand, against using extreme measures in their dealings with the Turks, and by urging the latter, on the other hand, to come to terms with the Greek rebels and thus save their empire from the internal weaknesses which were bound to invite outside attack. It was thus indirectly that British policy helped the cause of Greek independence in the early stages of the struggle, until the battle of Navarino in 1827 when the combined fleets of Britain, France and Russia destroyed the sea power of Turkey.

In England and throughout western Europe the Liberals and the Philhellenes were exasperated with the cold and cautious attitude of their governments towards the events in Greece, and clamoured for immediate action. Pro-Greek committees sprang up in many countries, and in some cases they sent out to the Greek battlefields their most impatient and enthu-

siastic members and supporters. The most celebrated of these was no doubt Byron, who had touched the imagination of Napoleonic and post-Napoleonic Europe not so much by his poetry as by his generous, romantic and above all enigmatic personality. The inevitable legend has of course been woven around the poet's last pilgrimage, the legend that his sole motive was to rescue the modern children of Hellas from the awful clutches of the Ottoman tyranny, and that he was another impulsive, generous and earnest Lafayette drawing his sword against the sinister forces of oppression. But we know that Byron was a very complex human being and that his motives for going to Greece were far more complicated than that. If at times he acted like a dreamy idealist, he could also be a realist to the point of cynicism; he had the courage and many of the qualities of the man of action, yet he suffered long periods of indecision; his temperament was both romantic and downright practical. When the secretary of the Greek Committee in London informed him of his appointment as a member, in a flamboyant letter which contained phrases like "the classic land of freedom," "the birthplace of the arts," "the cradle of genius," Byron replied with an exceedingly businesslike letter which brought the whole discussion down to earth with a bang. "The principal material wanted by the Greeks (he pointed out) appears to be, a park of field artillery—light and fit for mountain service; secondly, gunpowder; thirdly, hospital or medical stores." The poet had visited Greece ten years before the revolution and although he loved the people, he had none of the grand illusions of the stay-at-home Liberals and Philhellenes. But even if he had any illusions that the Greeks were different from the

Turks and other Balkan peoples, he seems to have shed them very soon after his second and last visit. In a letter to his close friend John Cam Hobhouse written just over a month after his arrival in Cephalonia he says: "Great divisions and difficulties exist; and several foreigners have come away in disgust, as usual. It is at present my intention to remain here as long as I see a prospect of advantage to the cause; but I must not conceal from you, and the committee, that the Greeks appear in more danger from their own divisions than from the attacks of the enemy. There is a talk of treachery, and all sorts of parties amongst them; a jealousy of strangers, and a desire of nothing but money. All improvements in tactics they decline, and are not very kind, it is said, to the foreign officers, etc., in their service." (September 11th, 1823.) *The Greeks appear in more danger from their own divisions than from the attacks of the enemy.* Those words would ring true to-day in any journalist's dispatch from Athens.

To Byron the pious and unadventurous atmosphere engendered by the Holy Alliance had always been intolerably suffocating; in his poetry and letters he had fought against it, but the quixotic fight had offered him no relief; in Greece he would be able to get away from it all, and at the same time make a practical contribution towards the victory of the new forces of the century. The struggle between the artist and the man of action had never ceased to be the central drama of Byron's inner life; he realised that Greece would probably be his last opportunity to leave the poet behind him and fulfil himself as a man of action. But that wasn't all; it would also offer him an escape from the *ennui* of his Italian life, from the endless love affairs, the gossip and the intrigues.

Right from the beginning the war

of Greek independence assumed a character of ruthlessness and atrocity which no enthusiastic Philhellene was prepared, or indeed able, to contemplate. For the Philhellenes the centuries of Byzantine and Turkish rule were almost non-existent—the centuries which had moulded the character and outlook of the people and made them in many ways indistinguishable from their oppressors. Archbishop Germanos of Patras proclaimed a holy war of extermination, in the name of the Greek Church, against the infidel Turk; his appeal met with instant success. At the beginning of the war there were about 25,000 Mohammedan settlers in the Peloponnese; within six weeks they were wiped out. Both sides massacred prisoners of war with equal ruthlessness and equanimity. But while Turkish barbarism filled Western Europe with holy rage and disgust, the cruelties of the Greek fighters were (in the words of a leading historian of the struggle) “condoned or glossed over with a classical allusion. They themselves were quick to seize an advantage which was at the same time gratifying to their vanity. Wily savages, like Odysseus of Ithaca, assumed the style and title of antiquity; and the men who afterwards proposed to pull down the Parthenon, and who did pull down the temple of Aphrodite in Aegina, posed ostentatiously before an admiring generation as the protagonists of classic culture against the barbarian.”* Byron’s death as a martyr of Greek liberty in 1824 added infinite glamour to the cause, and rendered more uncritical the enthusiasm of the Philhellenes.

The manner in which the war of independence was conducted, the vicissitudes of Greek history in the post-Ottoman period, the excessive influence of the army and the

church in national affairs, the factiousness and intolerance of political life and the horrors of the present civil war have their roots in the two main traditions of Greek history—the Byzantine and the Turkish. (Underneath the layers of the Byzantine tradition (a series of gorgeous, translucent mosaics of culture and civilisation superimposed on thick black slabs of obscurantism and superstition) and the dead-weight of the uncreative layers of Turkish domination, the heritage of the golden age of Hellas was buried very deep in the soil of Greece, like a subterranean river. Luckily for our civilisation the river emerged again in western Europe, and if modern Greece has derived any blessings from its creative waters it has done so through its contact with the West during the last hundred years. From the Byzantine epoch the country has inherited the factiousness of its political life and the pervasive influence of the Orthodox Church. Under the Ottoman regime, it should be remembered, the Greek clergy continued to enjoy special privileges not only in Greece but throughout the Balkans: the inner structure of the politico-religious Byzantine system remained thus more or less intact, even after the main outer structure had been destroyed by Turkish power. The influence of the church is still powerful and widespread to-day; when the country was looking for a Regent at the end of the war, all parties were unanimous on the choice of Archbishop Damaskinos, and the delegation which toured Europe and the United States some time ago for the purpose of acquainting the world with Greek territorial aspirations was not led by a politician, as one would expect, but by a bishop. The main impulse of Greek expansion is Byzantine and not Hellenic, as propagandists with a shrewd knowledge of

*W. Alison Phillips (*Modern Europe*, 1815-1899).

western susceptibilities to all sentimental links with the classical age would have us believe, the idea being to include within the Greek state as much as possible of the lands which are inhabited by former adherents of the Greek Byzantine Church. From Turkey the Greeks, together with their northern neighbours, have inherited some of those traits and practices which have made the term "Balkan" synonymous with violence and backwardness: preponderance of military influence in national life, the system of political spoils, the idea that the sole functions of the state are policing and tax-collecting, the excessive importance attached to *personal* leadership in political life, and corruption. Modern Greek history is littered with *coups d'état*, revolts and other political messes caused by the army; the army is in fact recognised as a purely political factor, and each government tries to make it a loyal instrument of its own will, while its opponents realise that their first task in the struggle for power is the undermining of that loyalty. Hence the mass dismissals, the political victimisations and the great changes that have to be made every time a new government takes office. And this system is not confined to the army but touches almost every branch of the state administration. There is no security even for teachers and professors: last year the government of Mr. Tsaldaris dismissed several professors (among them the Professor of Geology at the University of Athens and the Professor of Byzantine Philology at the University of Salonika) because their political views did not correspond with its own. It is impossible to exaggerate the terrible effect which this nightmarish insecurity has on the sanity and the nerves of the nation. As regards the

efficiency of the disruption and very not much to let Balkan countries not teach them Metaxas dictatorial island concentration single-party system youth movements trade unions, *Candida* and. For very recent hideous crimes war stab our hearts and hearts a Byzantium, Turkey's history of years have in the trace of that the Periclean all others, sanity, reasonable.

If any one examination of British and American the Greek pre-academic exercise grim fact that Greece and her neighbours, stretching western Turkey the new artificial the ever-torment but also the boundary between blocs. The clear United States in Greek affairs intensify the two colossi. And with political security and other are conducive tangle of exposed very edges of tangle is unc source of suffer the ordinary people can also become for the ordinary if its roots are

Existentialism

E. L. ALLEN

Some of us have become aware, since the end of the war, of a new literary fashion which is making itself felt among us, and which bears the barbarous and scarcely intelligible name of "existentialism." It began, we are told, as philosophy, but the stream which ran first in academic channels now flows in a much wider bed; the new ideas are being presented in France by a whole school of writers, with the novel and the drama as their principal means of expression. The master among them is Jean-Paul Sartre; one at least of his novels has been translated into English, and several of his plays have been broadcast in the Third Programme. If his influence, as seems likely, proves to be potent, there is much in it to disturb—a deliberate concentration on the more sordid elements in life, and a tendency to nihilism which springs out of the disillusionment to which Frenchmen were subject during and after the occupation of their country.

What is in danger of being overlooked by friends and foes of this new movement alike is that it is much older than is often imagined. It is, to be sure, a reaction from the dominant tradition in Western philosophy. In technical language, it approaches man's essence through his existence, not *vice versa*. What this means is that instead of considering him as consciousness and reason, it sets out from his actual situation in the world, as a finite and limited being, with problems pressing upon him which he cannot hope to solve, and with death lying in wait for him from moment to moment. In this, existentialism has its precursors in Augustine and Pascal. Each of these was acutely conscious of how problematic and perilous our human

situation is, and of the necessity we are under to find here and now that which will give meaning to our life.

The immediate source of existentialism is to be found, however, in two solitary and enigmatic figures of last century, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche. These men represent the two types of existentialism, one theistic and the other atheistic.

Kierkegaard rebelled against the Hegelianism which was dominant in his day in Denmark and had even established itself in theological circles. It was for him a vain attempt to transcend human limitations and to fit all the rich detail of life into a single, all-comprehending system. That was only possible for one who withdraws from life to contemplate it, instead of acting in it. He who acts knows himself to be under responsibility, he must win a truth which is truth for himself. In the effort to do so he encounters God as the Absolute Paradox, the Absurd, if we are to judge by ordinary standards.

Nietzsche, on the other hand, set out from the assertion that "God is dead." That being so, man is fatefully alone in the universe. His destiny is in his own hands, and he must set about making himself. In that enterprise he need not seek for guidance from outside himself, for none will be forthcoming. Man must make his own values, and the new table which he substitutes for the old will have much in common with the antique ideal of life which Christianity challenged. The one good gift which Christianity has given us is its summons to sincerity, and we to-day must turn that against it. If we are to be sincere, we can no longer be Christians. Our eyes are towards the future and the man who is to be made by man, the

Superman, as we may call him.

One of the first thinkers in Germany to appropriate for philosophical purposes the contribution of Kierkegaard and Nietzsche was Martin Heidegger, who occupied the chair of philosophy at Freiburg. His system is virtually a secularised and atheistic version of Kierkegaard. For him, man is "thrown down" into the world, and his existence in it is characterised by "care," care for a thousand things, both small and great. So he passes his life in sheer banality, enslaved to the moment and the mass-mind. One fact alone stabs him awake, and that is death. Death converts care into "dread," and dread stirs in him the consciousness of freedom. Deprived of all outward support, he realises that, while his destiny appears to be imposed upon him, it is in fact handed over to him to make. As free, man becomes aware of his responsibility; he must take over the situation in which he finds himself, though it is not of his making. He finds within himself a conscience, a voice which bids him decide between right and wrong and shape the future according to his own judgment.

In France Sartre has done little more than provide a lucid translation of these German ideas. He tells us that his thinking begins with the problem posed for education by the secularisation of the state. With God banished from the schools, it was assumed that absolute moral values would remain. That, he urges, was so much wishful thinking. With God go all moral standards that are not of our own making. We must therefore work out to the end the implications of atheism. Man is free and alone, though he knows that there are others about him. He must choose his own course of action for himself from moment to moment, and there is no guidance from beyond himself. He must therefore make

his own morality; if he wants any standards—and standards he must have—it is for him to invent them. What prevents his action from being merely capricious is that, as Kant warned us, we may not stamp anything as good for ourselves unless we are willing that it should be good for all others.

Over against Heidegger and Sartre we may set Karl Jaspers, formerly professor of medicine at Heidelberg and now professor of philosophy there. He too is an impassioned advocate of man's freedom, but he adds that in such measure as man exercises his freedom in obedience to conscience and in fellowship with others, he becomes convinced that he is not alone. Above all, he learns that he does not make himself except as he is willing to receive himself in grace from God, or, as Jaspers would prefer to say, from the Transcendent. Man is only truly man in so far as he recognises his dependence on what is beyond himself, and to that he draws nearest in the hours of crisis which are meant to discipline him by suffering. The Godhead is beyond our knowledge but we are not beyond his, and he communicates with us, as by a language of sign and symbol, through all that enters into our experience.

In France, Gabriel Marcel has linked Jaspers's existentialism with Catholic doctrine, and claims that the new philosophy is superior to Thomism as an introduction thereto. He does not give the same place to anguish and despair as the German thinkers, following in this Kierkegaard, do: for him, "hope is, perhaps the very stuff of which our souls are made." At the Collège de France Louis Lavelle is teaching what is sometimes called a "spiritual existentialism," which seeks to combine Plato and Kierkegaard. It is sufficient to mention two such names to show that Sartre

is not France; indeed, the intellectual choice there is sometimes described as that between Sartre and Lavelle.

It may be worth while to glance briefly at some of the points at which the distinction between the two types of existentialism can be seen most clearly.

First, to the question, what is there in the world beside man, the one would answer that there is nothing at all, the other that he lives, moves, and has his being in God. Lavelle would say that man participates in a spiritual life beyond his own, Heidegger that whatever has reality, has it because man has first conferred it. In Sartre's judgment, there is in addition to man only "the nothing," a sort of white screen on which man projects his ideas and his values.

Secondly, Sartre sets out from Dilthey's maxim that "man has no nature, but only a history." In other words, man is in a state of constant becoming; he is not made but is in the making. Further, he is called upon to make himself. But by whom? Jaspers would say by the Godhead; Sartre has no answer to the question. For the one, to be free is to be under an unconditional obligation; for the other, to be free is to be exempt from all obligations save those which one manufactures for oneself. In Sartre's play *The Flies* Orestes defies the gods in the name of his new-found freedom. He cries: "From now on I'll take no one's orders, neither man's nor god's." His pride is to be the self-made man.

Thirdly, perhaps the most striking divergence between the two patterns of thinking is over the relation of the individual to his fellows. For Sartre, the neighbour is primarily one who threatens my selfhood, wishing to make me into an object for his knowledge and an instrument of his purposes. The relation between us is therefore one

of conflict, since each can only maintain himself at the cost of the others. As he puts it in *Huis Clos*, "Hell is—other people." Sharply opposed to this is the account which Jaspers gives of communication as the giving and receiving between selves, and of love as the effort of two persons each to bring the other to his own truest self. He would say that our life is to be found in love, in those rare but enriching moments in which what is deepest in one person makes contact with what is deepest in another.

It is clear that the philosophies here discussed in sketchy fashion are not unrelated to the disturbing events of the last forty years. Heidegger and Jaspers wrote between the wars, and, as was indicated at the outset, the bitter experiences through which Frenchmen passed between the armistice and liberation—and indeed after liberation equally—may serve as a partial excuse for the nihilism of Sartre and his followers. Jaspers would no doubt say of them that their attitude is one of surrender to the situation in which they find themselves; they make a gesture of defiance, no doubt, but have no real hope of any redemption. Sartre would no doubt say of Jaspers that he has not yet emancipated himself from authority, he has not felt the force of Nietzsche's "God is dead."

The present writer has no intention of concealing where his sympathies lie. They are with Jaspers against Sartre. The opposition between the two reveals with unmistakable clarity the position in which we find ourselves to-day. We may become obsessed with our problems and incapable of anything save ineffectual heroics, or we may face them courageously, as those who believe that the very difficulties of our time may minister to an achievement not within our reach in more quiet periods of history. We

are to win our souls in and through our trials, and we can do so in the faith that, while we are free, we are not alone, the faith that, as

there is a law beyond our own desires for us to obey, so there is a wisdom beyond our uncertainties to guide us.

Welcome to Australia

CHARLES CAUSLEY

I used to think that my most striking recollection of Australia (in fact, of the whole war) would be of going into the bar of the Grand Orient Hotel at Fremantle, ordering two schooners of onion beer, slapping down an English pound and getting, in exchange, the two glasses of beer, an Australian pound note and half-a-crown. But it wasn't. However, thus does the English *matelot* learn that in Australia an English pound is worth twenty-five per cent. more. And it works the other way on the return journey: but, as usual, I didn't worry about that. I was too relieved to feel solid earth under my feet after the uncertainties of the Indian Ocean in the monsoon season. Oh! the horrors of being sick on a pusser's issue of lime-juice. I was always a miserable sailor. But this did not prevent aged leading-seamen and various chief petty-officers (who should have known better) telling me consistently from 1940 to 1946 that (a) it was all due to my imagination and (b) that I should get over it. Well; I did. After I was demobbed.

Here we were, in the bar, then: Tug Wilson and I. Tug Wilson was a seaman p.o., very tall and (I have said this before and fully intend saying it again) exactly like an Eric Kennington drawing. He was a bit younger than I: about twenty-five, I suppose. And, to tell you the truth, I was a bit flattered at his company. For Tug, you see, was an active-service rating; the real thing. I was merely hostilities-only. He had joined as a boy and had

been in about ten years. I had only been in five, and always felt very inferior. Although, by some miracle, I had been made a lesser type of p.o., I still detested the sea, knew nothing of ships, and, in fact, was always getting lost in ours: the *Glory*: a light fleet-carrier recently built in Belfast. I lived only for runs ashore. Tug, on the other hand, seemed to expand when we left harbour, went about whistling and walked well and confidently when the damn thing rolled. For him, perhaps, it was music when the anchor came up. For me, the sound contained all the rattlings of hell and, in the middle of the night, I still fancy I can hear it.

"Well Jan," said Tug, "have another." Tug always called me Jan: which put me neatly in my place. I happened to have been born in Cornwall; Tug came from Cumberland: a superior, Nordic type.

"All right," I said, "then what?" It was about 5-30. We had dashed ashore on the first liberty-boat and, as usual, piled up in the first saloon bar we came across. Fremantle was a pretty little place. When we first saw land, saw Australia curdling up—yellow, just as it is usually coloured in the atlas—out of a sea of boiling custard we hadn't known what to expect. Personally, I had always been profoundly disinterested in the place. Anyway: here we were; and I liked the middle-west, mining atmosphere. I liked the haphazard wooden shops, the iron balconies, the bungalows, the colonnades: and the air smelt fresh and

wet. One almost expected to see Andy Clyde in charge of a bucket-shop. Very nice.

"Let's go up to Perth," said Tug, "there's a 'bus: that dock-yard-matey said there's a 'bus. Let's go up to Perth and have a few wets, eh?" So we drank up, and as we came out a clock high up somewhere smashed out 5-30 I remember. And, of course, we had made a fatal mistake: for all bars in Australia shut at six.

§

As usual, I recollect no significant details of the ride. It was, I suppose, about twelve miles. But the 'bus was packed and we stood all the way: Tug with his head bent down at a sharp angle, like a broken Buddha. I tried to see something of the country, but succeeded only in seeing the nape of the neck of a large woman jammed between the window and me. By the time we arrived, however, the sun had come out and I do remember the swans on the river and the sight of the university buildings: very Californian, very technicolour.

We emerged from the 'bus halfway up a hill. Tug stood on the pavement sniffing the air vaguely. He had an unerring sense of direction which had got us out of God knows how many jams in Alexandria and Trincomali and Belfast, and I relied on him implicitly.

"This way," said Tug, and loped off up the hill.

Perth seemed a big place. There were trams, huge buildings, shops full of food and fruit and, I remember, flashy hats and silk-stockings. I learnt, years afterwards from a *Pears' Encyclopædia*, that it has "the largest municipal baths in the southern hemisphere": but I can't say I noticed any. And it was getting dark: the lights were coming on, and, although it was August, I had a sudden pang of homesickness and thought of Christmas.

"Here we are," said Tug, "*The Duke of Ipswich*. Lovely." And he pushed at the breast-high swing-doors. But instead of the doors opening inwards, they flew apart outwards in Tug's face and a little man came hurtling out into the gutter. A barman in an apron (I thought of him the other day when I saw *Odd Man Out*) came out, examined him, then disappeared inside, bolting the doors smartly behind him. "Well, the bastards," said the little man in the gutter, quietly.

Tug and I helped him up. He was a curious little chap of about forty-five, I imagine, with a red, loose, leathery face: rather like an old rexine sofa that has been well dosed with whisky.

"What about a drink?" said Tug. The little man sized us up at once.

"You're pommies? From England?" he said.

"That's right," said Tug. "In to-day."

"You've 'ad it," said the little man, "they shut 'ere at six."

"No?" said Tug, incredulous, as though someone had just shown him the Indian rope trick. "What a bleeding country!"

"'Ere," said the little man, sharply, "that's enough o' that. Tell you wot: I'll take you 'ome to my place, man. Give you a drink." Now although the little man spoke clearly enough, he was very pickled: pickled to the ears. I had awful visions of Tug and the little man fighting policemen and breaking great plate-glass windows.

"Oh no," I said, "we couldn't possibly—"

"How far?" said Tug.

"A 91 car. 'Ere y'are now," said the little man. "Hey, 91!" And he grasped Tug and I by the hand and floated rapidly, as drunks do, across the sea of traffic and dragged us on board. Tug winked broadly and raised and lowered his right elbow significantly.

"All right, eh?" he mouthed at me, behind the little man's back.

§
We learnt quite a lot about the little man on that uproarious ride in the tram through the respectable suburbs of Perth. His name, he said, was George Swayne ("Call me Taff") and he was from Cardiff, had come out in 1921. He was what the Australians call a "returned soldier"; that is, an ex-service man, although I think he had got no nearer the Germans than an R.A.S.C. hut on Salisbury Plain in 1918. By profession, he was a french-polisher. He had originally planned to emigrate to Sydney: but his ship had docked for two months at Fremantle on the way out, and he had got no further than Western Australia. Here, at Perth, he had married, got two children, and they all lived with his mother-in-law.

"When you said," he confided to Tug, "what a bleedin' country" I felt I 'ad to take you home. You'll like my mother-in-law, Mrs. Kelly. She ain't a music-all joke; she's a damn good sort. My missus and kids have gone to Southern Cross. But you must meet Mrs. K. She's all right."

And, like all converts, he was a passionate protagonist of everything Australian. ("I didn't like to hear you talk like that about the old country.") Tug and I, of course, agreed equally passionately, that their food, bridges, climate, rates of pay, everything, were the finest in the world. Looking back on it, it seems surprising to me that we didn't break into song about it. Perhaps it was because at this moment we arrived at Mrs. K's.

§
It was a large, wooden house; very like one of those ramshackle country places where murders are always committed in American films. Mrs. Kelly, who looked a cross between Lady Macbeth and

Orson Welles, was on the veranda to greet us.

"Well, come in boys!" she said, "Pommie friends of George, eh? Welcome to the British Navy! Of course, dear old George isn't a pommie any longer: he's an Aussie, like me, and Flo and the youngsters, aren't you George, dear?"

"Yes, ma, I'll say I am!" said George, enthusiastically, "Dear old Aussie: land of sunshine. When I think o' them: fogs back in England, man—ugh!" (By this time it was raining heavily outside, but we seem to have ignored it.) "And you know what, ma?" went on George.

"No?" said Mrs. K, archly, raising her heavy, Tower Bridge eyebrows.

"They didn't like Australia because the bars shut at six! So I just had to bring 'em home for a drink and a bit to eat, didn't I ma?"

"Why yes, George," said Mrs. K, "Why, any friends of yours—" And she bustled heavily about the kitchen. She didn't actually have a bunch of iron keys at her waist or a raven on her shoulder, but I remember thinking how well they would have looked on her.

"Twenty-three years!" said George, "and I don't regret a damn day: no sir. You chaps ever think of emigrating?"

"Yes," said Tug, before I could stop him, "back home."

"When I think of what I might 'ave been doing in England," went on George, happily, dragging out a case of beer, "and here I am: married to dear old Flo. Pity she's in Southern Cross, two lovely kids, six-seventeen-six a week, and dear old ma, dear old Mrs. K." And he pecked her affectionately on the cheek.

"Oh George!" squawked Mrs. K, delighted, smashing a glass, "Come on, pour out, do the honours! A drink to dear old

Australia. Let's welcome these boys to the old countrie." And her eyes met George's. George smiled back affectionately, warmly. Their feeling for the place was really touching, and I think Tug felt it too. I was beginning to feel embarrassed: it seemed indecent to be sitting there feeling snooty about their real affection for what was, after all, their home.

"I'll get another glass," she said, "one for myself. I'm excited: smashing it like that. Go on—pour out, shan't be a tick." And she went out.

It was, then, as she went, that a

most extraordinary thing happened. George flung himself with his back to the door, his face working, changing completely.

"Come on boys," he said rapidly, quietly, "drink up. A real toast. I got trapped into this marriage by that old cow. I hate the sight of her, *and* my wife, *and* the two kids. Coo—the little shockers. I wish to God I'd never left Cardiff. Quick, before the old bitch comes back, man. Drink up! To hell with Australia!"

We drank. And he hurled his glass across the room, smashing it into a thousand savage pieces.

Cooka

ROBERT SEEDS

She was very small. She was withered and very small. She was an Indian woman in South America. Her parting gift to the children was a green, growing thing in a pot. It was many years ago.

Cooka, they called her, for that was her name. No one knew how it was spelt—perhaps it was *Cuca*, in Spanish. Or perhaps it was *Kuka*, in some Indian language, if an Indian still had a language and used it. Cooka was not a bad name: she seemed to be part of the house, to have become part of its downstairs part. She was apparently attached to the English house—at least while the children were there. So they called her, Cooka, by name—even if no one knew how Cooka was spelt, or no one enquired.

Lord knows where she got it. The Indians did not have gardens. Their hovels piled up towards the church on the hill, edging the cobbles and dry, broken earth of the road, reeking and staggering upwards in a makeshift press of

building and open drains.

There the donkeys showed neat and agile as they picked their way in and out. The hooves struck hard on the stones and cut sharply into the dust. The wooden pack-saddles tilted and the petrol-tins swayed and the broad bands of webbing rubbed at the breasts of the donkeys or pressed on their tails. The petrol-cans went up and down the road to the church, among the hovels, slopping at the edges, and were full of oil maybe for cooking, or maize for eating, or water that an Indian might drink.

There the Indians went about among themselves. They lived there. Doubtless Cooka lived there and came down every day to the English house.

There were plenty of Indian women. Their feet came out flatly, lean and untiringly, from their long black skirts. Their shawls were dark envelopes and their hats were canopies. Beneath it all went the Indian women and, if there were no

packs on their backs—if, for a moment, there were no loads slung on their backs from broad bands of webbing across their brows—then there were short, shining twists of black hair to be seen, hanging, two plaits to a woman, at the fold of her shawl.

Any one of these Indian women was a picture of Cooka. But she was a miniature of them. When she stood at the side of Pedro, she did not reach the top of his back—and he was a dog.

Pedro was a very large dog. He had white, rough hair and one wall-eye in his great rough head. But he was a dog, standing on all four feet.

Lord knows how she got it. The Indians got hold of all sorts of things. An Indian down in the *llanos* might snap something out of the wilds; he might trap a bird or a deer. He would pass it on to a village. It might stay in the Indian village until most of the wildness had gone, and then be passed up to another—and so on, until up near the town—finally to be lodged even a little above it, with an Indian under the church. This Indian would bring the living thing—the bird or the deer—to the English house, where such ware was usually bought if too great a price was not charged. Then this Indian would climb towards the church again, and the money, descending, go back down the line.

With the Indian women Cooka frequented the markets. They bought food for the houses in which they worked downstairs. It was often hens that were bought, to be taken back to the houses so that they could be killed, cooked, and eaten there.

Cooka was not customarily incommoded by her size; but she was

with hens. The Indian carried live fowl by the legs—heads and wings hanging down so that these brushed the dust and grew quiet. Cooka could not arrange this: her arms were too near the ground. She came back to the house with her hens, but she ceased temporarily to be an Indian woman. She seemed to be hens carrying Cooka.

There have always been birds and deer and Indians in the *llanos*. There were in the town always hens and Indian women going from the houses to market. It is not known what the Indians kept for themselves: there were their homes on the road to the church—and it is presumed there were wages. But it is not known what they valued.

There was much to take when the English household was packed. The fair English children had so many things that a good deal was left behind.

A parrot was taken. That was a habit. They said: "*Quiere cacao?*" Polly, *quiere cacao?*"—though no parrot, as a fact, wanted cocoa; it seemed to be a tradition of the town. And a squirrel was left: it was said that a squirrel would not travel, and the cage was cumbersome.

A kinkajou was taken. A cat was left: "oh we'll find you another, yes, just the same, and he wouldn't, you know, want to leave the house." Many people came for the leftovers. Many people came to say goodbye to the children, and various people brought them good-bye presents.

Cooka was withered and very small. Perhaps that is why she chose a green thing growing in a pot.

She was the smallest woman that the children have ever seen. They have remembered.

Germany: October 1947 (II)

[P. HOGAN

It is difficult for a mere visitor to assess the extent of Germany's suffering to-day. Heaven forbid that I should seem to minimise it in any particular; but I would be a liar if I did not say that I found, among the rubble of the Ruhr, at least the semblance of normal living. I saw nobody drop dead of hunger in the street; about three-quarters of the children wore proper shoes; and of the rest few were barefoot, even though the October days were warm as August. But when I scratched beneath the surface I found, as always, much material misery, undernourishment, lack of amenity, common hardship and fear of want in the coming winter, and above all, fear of Russian aggression. I realised too that even though half-starved children can play boisterously in the streets to-day, in five or fifteen years they may have paid the price and succumbed to any of a dozen diseases.

I began my rounds in Oberhausen with bunkers: the Helmholz and the Mittelschule. Both were incomparably better than the ghastly hole I saw in Brunswick, the Helmholz especially. It was occupied by the town orchestra: the players come from all over the zone and are dumped in the bunker because there's nowhere else to live. We met the bunker leader or commandant or whatever (I nearly wrote "hall-porter") in an entrance hall radiant with paint and a 200-watt bulb; we walked comfortably along empty corridors and looked into small but brightly-lit and newly-papered and painted rooms—rooms not overcrowded and often decently furnished. Most of the men, for the time being, were living alone; but as reconstruction and decoration progressed their

families would be able to join them. The men complained of the dry heat of the bunker, which gave them sore throats when they woke up in the mornings. They mentioned, too, the lack of natural light and the difficulty of getting electric light bulbs. I am told that the concrete walls of the bunkers are so thick that windows could not be let in without blasting; and that may not be practicable. Nevertheless, in comparison with the squalor of the Brunswick bunker, Helmholz was a swagger hotel, in spite of its shortcomings.

I noticed that many shops in Oberhausen seemed well stocked with furniture, wireless sets and so on; but my companion explained that few people but the miners had access to them. The Ruhr is a miners' world. They have the purchasing points, and can buy things which nobody else can. The poverty—real rather than merely monetary—of the rest of the population came home to me later that day when I visited the great iron and steel works of Gute Hoffnungs Hütte. We were taken out to one of their subsidiary companies specializing in the manufacture of fireclay products, grates for locomotives, and so on. Here girls and men work in virtually nothing but their overalls. They dare not risk wearing underclothes, because the oil they have to use would penetrate and ruin them. As it is, the oil seeps through their overalls to the skin. "Give us soap, not cigarettes," said one man. If they have no overalls, they wear their old army clothes and boots. Many ex-Servicemen have no other garments whatever, so that when they get home at night they have to go to bed, simply because they have, literally, no clean clothes into which to change.

We looked at the workers' shoes. Some wore sabots, others sandals, or shoes several sizes too big, or old shoes burst at the uppers and with soles like tissue paper. To the one man who mentioned soap, a score spoke of clothes—shoes and men's clothes particularly. These specific needs are voiced wherever one goes; their genuineness cannot be gainsaid.

But it would be wrong to ascribe such hardship solely to the fact that Germany is a vanquished enemy cut into zones and occupied by the Allied armies. I can remember a certain brewery in the north of England where, as late as 1943, boys in the bottling department used to come to work in shoes so bad that the broken glass on the floor would cut their feet. Labourers in that same brewery, as late as 1939, were paid £3 a week, and foremen £3 10s. per week. Most were married; many had children. Several were Catholics with enormous families. How did they live?

In the Ruhr, as elsewhere, industrialism is a blight which immediate and temporary shortage of consumer goods merely accentuates. Let the workers in Gute Hoffnungs Hütte enjoy the same rations as the miners and be able to buy as many motor cars and fur coats as their hearts desire, and the squalor and frustration will still be there. Gramophones and radio sets, cinemas and dog racing, do nothing to relieve the deeper impoverishment of the man at the conveyor belt, whose job demands only a capacity for sheer endurance. Endow the men in G.H.H. with the whole world and their souls shall not profit as much as those of the poor D.P.s who struggle to make, with their own hands and by their own initiative, some urgently necessary article out of bits of scrap and salvage.

I wondered, later that day, how

far these speculations preoccupy the average relief worker, brought up in a comfortable middle-class home, educated at Ackworth or Sidcot and now preparing to return to Woodbrooke or one of the universities. Do they realise that even in "prosperous" England life for millions is a meaningless monotony, quickened only by the vast and perennial uncertainty as to their economic future?

Even as I mused, one of these same bourgeois relief workers broke upon my thoughts with a sudden, spontaneous reminiscence of the bad days last spring: "The bread queues were terrible. People started to queue at six in the morning, and even so they weren't sure of getting anything. A woman I know explained how they used to do it. The father would begin to queue at six and stand there until seven. Then one of the children would take a turn until eight, and another until nine, by which time the mother would be ready to take her stand for the rest of the morning. The people were amazingly good through it all. One morning an old woman was behind my friend in the queue, and by the time my friend had been served there was nothing left. Without more ado she asked the baker to cut the loaf and give the old woman half. She was worried to death as she did it, because she had her own family to consider. But she felt she could do no other, and there were thousands like her."

That broke my line of thought—which suddenly seemed petty and irrelevant.

§
One of the most exhausting aspects of my tour was to be met everywhere with complaints—often wholly justifiable—which the hapless relief worker can do little to remedy, or requests for supplies one can do nothing to meet. "Let us know," said the foreman at the

G.H.H. brickworks, "when we are to send round to collect the things." To a people desperately short of the first necessities of life, the spectacle of the well-fed and well-clad poking around and asking innumerable questions must be infinitely exasperating; and the irony in the foreman's voice was not wasted on us. In the car going back I tried to explain to the G.H.H. welfare officer that money was increasingly hard to come by in England. As Friends' Relief Service was so short of funds, which (I asked) did he think we ought to do—spend a little on food and a little on the expenses of collecting clothes, or spend the whole on the latter? He did not seem to grasp what I was getting at; he made a long reply about the people's gratitude, etc. Later one of the team put the question to a group of German welfare workers, who all agreed that we should continue as now—that is, that we should send both food and clothing. I was to learn later why everybody harped on clothing and didn't mention food.

I ought to mention here that not everything in the Ruhr is equally depressing. Here and there one sees the beginnings of a new building: either a brick wall rising from the rubble, or a wreath on a chimney pot—the usual German celebration of building progress. I visited an artificial-limb manufacturer who had to admit that material supplies, though painfully inadequate, were improving. I saw a T.B. sanatorium which had been opened only a few months before: a beautiful house in beautiful surroundings. (There were two flies in this ointment, however: the first, a formidable waiting-list; the second, the fact that patients got well in the sanatorium and relapsed as soon as they reverted to "normal" conditions outside.) And on my last morning I visited a refugee camp in the woods behind the autobahn

near Duisburg. The place was run (I think) by one of the German organizations like Caritas Verband, and the progress was astonishing. Brick and concrete cowhouses, piggeries and other farm buildings; a boiler house to provide heat for the whole camp; a proper drainage system: these were some of the works already in hand. The camp houses refugees who for one reason or another have been forced to realise that they have left the east for ever—old folk, disabled men and so on. It seemed that here was a pattern for all refugee camps, just as in Helmholz one saw what could be done with a bunker.

Good as these things are, the central tragedy remains. On my second night in Oberhausen a young German took me to the station to see the "hamstering" train return. He wanted to kill two birds with one stone—to shew me the black market in the station entrance as well as the returning hamsterers. But the police had rounded up the black market the previous evening and the train from Hannover was already over a hundred minutes late.

Nevertheless an enormous crowd seethed on the dark platform—a crowd significantly armed with suitcases, portmanteaux and sacks, and obviously at the beginning rather than the end of their quest. Rolf was convinced that we should "see something," and as he spoke an awful microphone voice boomed out in unintelligible German—announcing (Rolf explained) that the train from Cologne to Hamm and Hannover was approaching, and warning intending passengers not to attempt to travel on the roofs or between coaches or on the running boards. "Better," said the voice, "to wait until to-morrow than to risk death to-night."

The tension among the crowd seemed almost visible and palpable, and Rolf almost jumped and

clutched my sleeve as the train came slowly in from the west. Apart from the blaze of the locomotive fire the train was in darkness from end to end, but the dim light of the platform was enough to show that every compartment and corridor was crammed. Before the last squeal of the brakes, the crowd had assaulted the train; men were shinning up the backs of coaches to the roofs; others were banging on the windows and shouting raucously for the passengers inside to open; while yet others tried to force an entrance through the doors at the ends of the coaches.

I thought of Gollancz; I thought of the hundreds of articles and letters I had read in the press in the past two years; and I thought of my own poor efforts to raise money for food, to get people to collect clothing. I knew now what these articles and letters had been about, I knew why Gollancz was obsessed, and why I (an escapist first and last) was on Oberhausen station this night. This was what I had come to Germany to see: it gave meaning and perspective to the whole.

"All for thirty pounds of potatoes," said Rolf, as though capping my own musings. We heard a tinkle of glass and hurried towards it. Under the light of my torch we saw a man carefully picking out the broken pieces of one of the coach windows, then hand in his suitcase, heave himself up and clamber in. I thought of the Thomas who would not believe until he had seen the imprint of the nails. Would "they" in England believe—could I make them believe, unless they too saw the imprint of broken glass in the palms of Hans Schmidt's hand? The shattering of glass began to sound up and down the platform, and Rolf remarked that by the time this train reached Hannover there was never a whole pane left.

He had to get his own train home to Duisburg, and we could not wait to see the hamsterers depart. My last glimpse was of a woman clinging to two iron vertical rails at the back of a coach. Perhaps she was standing on one of the buffers, or perhaps somebody was already sitting on the buffer and she standing on his knees. I saw her face and other faces, tense and contorted. It was like a vision of the damned.

I could surmise now what hunger meant—or the fear of it. I knew now why everybody asked for clothing and not for food. They realised that the little Quaker body could not feed the twenty-three million in the British zone, and that food was a problem of a magnitude incomparably greater than that of clothes. Food one needed every day, and three or four times a day. The more you thought about food, the more you needed it. And in Germany to-day they think about food, hour in and hour out. Fear of having no food is greater even than the fear of Russian aggression.

But clothing—well, the overcoat on my own back was already eight years old and seemed good for another eight. In comparison with food, clothing might well seem to the average German not a problem at all. Even if they had only rags, rags worn carefully can hold together for days, weeks, months. And the Germans are masters in the art of make do and mend. But one's belly won't hold together on nothing for days, or weeks, or months; and you can't stew or bake or roast rubble.

So they sell, let us say, their piano for potatoes. Even in the later sonatas, opus 109 *et seq.*, there are no vitamins or calories for the belly. And they take the night train to the great growing areas two or three hundred miles away to get every potato they can lay their hands on. Clothes don't matter;

perhaps the good Quakers can help them out a little in that respect. They don't need clothes for breakfast, more clothes for dinner and still more clothes for supper. But they need a fresh breakfast every breakfast; you can't re-eat yesterday's to-day.

Rolf told me that at Duisburg a little while before, the German police had had to set dogs on the people trying to board this night train, in order that it could start at all. "But the C.C.G. trains," he added, "are usually more than half empty."

The following morning he took me round the Ruhr towns. Near Meiderich is a complicated network of railway lines; and here, at a certain time, a goods train comes along which is often raided and robbed. He drove me to the spot and explained how the raiders sometimes attempt to change the signal to "halt" and tie it up. Somewhere in the zone four hundred people had attacked a potato train recently and it had taken the police five hours to cope with the situation.

I began to see now that my question, formulated so conscientiously and painstakingly to the G.H.H. welfare official, must have seemed to him bumptious and idiotic. As though it matters a damn to a hungry, humiliated nation (the nation, be it ever remembered, of Beethoven and Goethe, Bach and Kant) whether a charitable organization in England spent its £60,000 wholly on cod liver oil or only partly on cod liver oil. But I could see too why the *Fürsorgerinnen*, the little group of social workers, could take the question seriously—why they could understand and respect the limited contribution and the goodwill behind it. I could see, and respect, both points of view now: the nihilistic despair of the masses, and

the indefatigable efforts of the responsible minority.

I saw, too, in microcosm both points of view manifest in the team's two secretaries. Rolf was all despair and pessimism; Esther, a girl of about the same age, belonged more to the other category; she had responded more to the Quaker influence, and her mother was a member of the German Red Cross. I liked them both and I liked being with them, partly because I am easier in myself, less constrained, with the young, and partly because they were both Germans and I wanted to be with Germans during my visit as much as possible.

They were both about twenty. Rolf had been pitchforked into the Army at sixteen; Esther had been active on the Oberhausen roofs, putting out incendiary bombs, at fourteen. Rolf to-day is as curious about life in England as he is embittered and despairing about life in Germany. He asked me innumerable questions about conditions in England and our "crisis," and quickly reduced me into feeling myself the most specious of humbugs when I tried to explain that living in England is not easy and that many things are in short supply. Again and again as we drove through the grey Ruhr streets between the mountains of rubble, he quoted Churchill and the promise of "liberation," and begged me to look about me, to try to imagine how people lived among and under these ruins, to remember the hamsterers the previous night, to look at the black market, the knots of loiterers at street corners in every town and suburb we passed through, and to ask myself if *this* was liberation, if *this* was the "chance of a new start." And when I tried to hide behind the Quadrupartite Agreement and to suggest that it might be that Britain and America were tied by their relations

with Russia, he replied: "Yes, Russia. Always Russia. Us poor Germans. . . ." He saw Germany as hemmed in by enemies, and went centuries back down the dusty corridors of history to prove that in Franco-German relations, France not Germany had been the first aggressor.

Germany to-day is a place where the Englishman is asked many questions he cannot answer, or hesitates to answer. Most Germans, and for that matter most D.P.s, believe that war with Russia is not only inevitable but imminent. Not once but fifty times I was told of the shortage of electric bulbs—and invariably I was also told that electric bulbs were made in the Russian zone and were therefore unobtainable. As for the prisoners-of-war returning from Russia, their ghastly plight speaks for itself—and their families don't hesitate to say so. One relief worker told me that she made a practice, when talking to Germans, of trying to avoid all mention of Russia or of topics likely to lead that way. But she could never bring it off. No conversation in Germany ever goes on for more than five minutes before the menace across the zonal frontier crops up. Once the menace is mentioned the conversation plods its dreary way with dreadful inevitability. How can an honest Englishman deny the menace, or deny that electric bulbs and many other commodities are made in the Russian zone and are therefore unobtainable, or assert that Russia to-day is more amenable, guileless and cooperative than Germany in 1939? It is useless to say that Russia is so ravaged by war as to be impotent to start another. To this the intelligent young German gives one of two answers: either he submits disarmingly elaborate and convincing proof that Germany's colossal advance into Russia did not interfere with Russia's war

potential in the least; or he points out, with terrible logic, that if war with Russia must come, then surely it should come now—this week, to-day—while Russia is still ravaged and crippled.

I can still dissociate myself from Rolf's point of view, but I admit I found it hard to stand up to the battery of his questions; and never, during my time in Germany, did I trot out the pacifism I am so ready with in the sweet security of Golders Green and the Euston Road. In spite of the 1940 blitz, the flying bombs of 1944, the rockets of 1945, and Hiroshima, a strip of water all round one's shores is still a comforting amenity.

Lastly, another admission. On the Saturday afternoon a member of the team had to take the Oberhausen group of the Fellowship of Reconciliation to meet the Cologne group. The meeting, or lecture, was to be in German, and I did not attend. But I was glad of the opportunity of seeing Cologne.

I did not see Cologne, for there is no Cologne to see. I admit I saw Hamburg at dusk or in total darkness, and that I saw Cologne, or what had been Cologne, in sunlight. Nevertheless, however imperfect my impressions, I know that in future, whenever I think of bombing and its horrors, I shall think of Cologne—the interminable miles of sheer devastation with the cathedral in the middle of it, damaged but intact, its lines soaring heavenwards in ironic prayer.

I stood with Franz, our driver, outside the F.O.R. place on the Rhine embankment at five o'clock, waiting for the others to come out. Although he had been a prisoner-of-war in Derby and other places, Franz spoke only a few words of English; and I had no German. We stood and smoked and watched the boats on the Rhine. I remember a large pleasure steamer, crowded

with Germans singing lustily to the accompaniment of what sounded like a brass band; and some of them appeared to be dancing on the promenade deck. Already the afternoon's heat had gone and a white mist hung over the distant reaches of the river. We watched the boat until the mist had swallowed it up, and listened to the music and the voices until the rumble of a street car behind us, on its way to Beethoven's Bonn, cut us off from melody and rhythm and we could hear no more.

I felt unbearably depressed, although I knew these moments were infinitely precious. Franz showed me photographs of his family and tried to explain that the war had damaged his health and that he would never be able to return to his old job. He was a quiet gentle creature, with a face of remarkable tranquillity. I knew that if we had been able to talk easily and readily, I would have found in him none of the bitterness and restlessness I found in Rolf. To Franz, I suspected, war was a thing that happened: you fought merely because "they" told you to fight. That he and I, German and Englishman, should now be standing together by the Rhine in mutual trust and respect would not seem to him something special or beautiful, but merely something *perfectly natural*.

I was depressed because of the ruins I had seen, because I could not think of the right words to describe the awful gesture of the aspiring lines of the maimed cathedral, because of the melancholy of the setting sun and the dying day and the music on the waters and the word BONN on a tram indicator. Perhaps I was not depressed so much as full in heart at the thought that at last, in my forty-fourth year, I should be here in Cologne, looking down upon the Rhine, with a real German beside

me; and that the Rhine should be so like the Thames, a sheet of water with boats on it; and that this embankment should be so like the Victoria Embankment, with its trams and dusty trees, between Blackfriars and Westminster. For a brief spell (so it seems now) it had been vouchsafed to me to see the miraculous in the bathetic, the glory of God in the broken Hohenzollern bridge.

Light thickened and a chill wind blew up from the water. We crossed the roadway and waited by the Quaker-grey 30 cwt. wagon. One or two people came out of the garden at the side of the house, looked at the inscription on the side of the wagon, looked at us in tentative recognition, and passed on.

A minute later the afternoon was torn to shreds and jumped on. The F.O.R. was dispersing. From the path by the side of the house the chattering idealists approached, oozing goodwill and a militant spirit of reconciliation: the lonely, the weary and the defeated, lost in the perennial delusion that good-mixing is fellowship. They had had, I learned, a grand discussion, which had culminated in the revolutionary conclusion that the only way to stop war was not to fight. I sulked in the dark all the way back to Oberhausen.

And my last admission, which has been dangling in the air so long? It is this. When I got back to England I was asked to speak on the spiritual condition of youth in Germany. I refused; but I know what I would have talked about, had I accepted. I would not have talked about the noble work of the F.O.R. in Germany, nor about the dangers of nihilism and despair in so many of the best young people. With the grace of God I would have kept clear of idealism altogether and talked merely about the

happy village children in Pivits-
heide who flooded our batteries
and emptied our petrol tanks while
the conference was in progress,
about the waiter at the hotel there
who waited on a hundred of us
almost single-handed and never lost
his style, flourish or temper; about
the girl with the pears, about Rolf
in his pained bewilderment, Esther

in the loveliness of her budding
womanhood and Franz as he stood
with me by the Rhine that day. I
would have talked about these
people, not because they typify or
provide a key to Germany to-day,
but because (as Montaigne would
have said) "they were they, I was
I"—because, in plain English, I
loved them.

Lament for Dresden

JOHN NORMANTON

Two years ago I left this foreign city
In the pale light of a cold winter's morning
From the *Neustadt-Bahnhof*, by a slow train.
There was no clinging girl with vain goodbyes,
No doubtful love to complicate my heart.
Only the handshakes of a few friends
And shapes of beauty in the building-stone
Bade me farewell.

These I remember,
And the familiar river, flowing through the city.

The city, now, has been torn up and burnt,
And is fallen with other towers—Carthage, Rome,
Athens, Pompeii, Warsaw and Rotterdam.
Rubble slopes down toward the tramlines in
The tender dusk of Saxony, and the dead
Still lie beneath with brickdust in their throats.
Why should I sorrow for a fallen city?
I have seen dawn on dawn afire behind
That sharp horizon of baroque, that now
Is broken,

but my bitterness is spent
And rage is burnt out, leaving only fear
For the world and men, under another menace.

FORUM

A REPLY TO MR. MURRY

Mr. Middleton Murry's recent articles advocating the creation of a "new type of man," "making the miners suffer" if they strike, and praising Sir Oswald Mosley, are a sad sign of the present trend of British intellectuals towards an acceptance of totalitarian thought. Mr. Murry perches himself, in the *Adelphi*, on the throne of a demigod, dogmatizes on the future of mankind and from his position as an intellectual threatens the miners—who are too busy to write articles—with dire penalties if, in effect, they disagree with him about the future of mankind.

I worked as a miner for two years, during the war and have since toured the coalfields and I would like to suggest to Mr. Murry that the miners might approach the problems of man and society from a different standpoint and in a radically different manner from himself *and still not be wrong*. (Certainly they would not fancy a world run by a Mosleyan, Crippsian or Murryan *élite*.) The present attitude of the miners—and throughout my remarks I use the term "miners" as separate and distinct from the term "Union officials," who are a very different "vested interest"—I assure Mr. Murry from recent observation, is something like this: We imagined that nationalisation implied people's control in a real and not an abstract and theoretical sense, and that we would gain a direct say in the organisation and administration of the industry, not through our permanent officials at head offices but immediately and personally, here at the pit-head. But the Coal Board's conception of industrial democracy appears to be: "The

Government appointed us to administer the mines, and we do so. That's that." Ex-mineowners (including some notoriously bad employers) are often given positions of power and responsibility by the Coal Board, unpopular agents and managers are retained in their posts and the administration generally is heavy-handed and dictatorial. We want to know when we will gain a direct say in the appointment of managers, agents and controllers.

Present discontents in the coalfields are all indirectly due to this fundamental dissatisfaction. The Unions are not, as Mr. Murry seems to imagine, leaders of the men in continually demanding further concessions. (Mr. Arthur Horner is very much the exception who proves the rule, and he has his own political motives.) The bulk of the Union leaders criticise the Government at all only because otherwise they would entirely lose the confidence of the men. They have almost lost it already—inevitably, since the problem in the coalfields is basically this: on whom will the final responsibility for the working of the mining industry rest, the Coal Board (that is, the Government), or the men? The Union leaders are a worried buffer-state. There are only two solutions: rigid Government dictatorship as in Germany, leading to discontent and eventually to widespread strikes and revolution, or the gradual delegation of responsibility to elected committees at each pit, these being co-ordinated by a body elected from workers, Union officials and technical experts. I haven't space here to enter into the detailed views of the four

bodies of opinion in the coalfields: Coal Board, technicians, Union officials and miners, but the basic facts are plain. Talk of moral responsibility, in general, national terms, appeals only to intellectuals used to theories and abstractions. Personal and immediate responsibility for the quality and organisation of work is the only kind of responsibility the miners understand. At present they have none, argue how you will. If you choose to ignore this, you help to precipitate final social schism.

And now—this: "What is required is that the social order itself should be such as to encourage the emergence of a new and finer human type. . . . In order to create that new social order, a new and fully conscious *élite* is required." I earnestly remind Mr. Murry, remembering at the same time that he is a cleverer man than I, that his words resemble those of the Grand Inquisitor, who, working in the

name of an abstract charity, was incapable of real and personal love, and inevitably and irrevocably *denied Christ*. In fact the triumph of the Mosleys, the Crippses, the moulders of man's mind, would be the triumph of antichrist, which is indeed prophesied. For is any man or set of men alive fit to be trusted with the moulding of the innocent and the ignorant in a chosen image? It is against this conception of man and society as an abstract "community," the only purpose of man's pilgrimage a material paradise, that we must fight to the last if life is to have meaning, and that, believe it or not, the miners in asserting their right to personal responsibility, and the few dissident remnants who assert *their* right to vocation despite Direction of Labour and Direction of Life, *are* fighting, and will continue fighting until the atom bomb bursts us all, me, you and the *Adelphi*.

J. B. PICK

OSWALD MOSLEY ON STYLE

In a letter giving his reaction to the long notice of his book printed in the last number of *The Adelphi*, the author of *The Alternative*—which proclaims that patriotism is not enough: that Union of the European nations with those of European stock in the continent of America, i.e., the U.S.A., is necessary to develop Africa as "the estate of the European," is essential if European civilization is not to go down into obliteration and darkness—wrote the following passages:

I thank you very much for enclosing Middleton Murry's review, which I greatly appreciated. He has really understood some of the main themes of the book; so far, rather an event in both friend and foe. . . . Do tell him that my attitude to the present system does not arise from any arrogant refusal to co-operate with existing personalities, but from the deep belief that the existing

system will no longer work in the future. I am really not animated by a desire to get on top of the English; so far as I am concerned, they can let their Oedipus complex stand at ease. But, as a mechanic, I feel that the machine will not work and, as a spirit, I am moved by the desire to save three millennia of high culture and to assist the emergence in new and higher form of beauty in civilization.

As for style, it inevitably offends the current taste, as my thought violates current thought. The ultimate life of my book will not be determined by any question of style, but by its thought content. To me, only two things matter in style—clarity and power. By power I mean conviction, passion and what the Germans mean by *Schwung*, which is something different from Swing. If anyone can show me a passage in *The Alternative* which is not intelligible I will, at once, re-write it!

For years past I have not only striven to develop in myself a style which is antithetical to the style which is now fashionable, but to persuade and encourage younger men to develop the

same antithesis in their own way. The graceful parentheses, and charming inability to be so rude as to arrive at any definite conclusion are the current fashion in style, but are no vehicle for our thought. All really new thought develops a new style (it may take time in coming), e.g., the difference between Cæsarian and Ciceronian prose, the difference between the Cromwellian and the Elizabethan prose, the difference between a manifesto by Napoleon and a speech by Mirabeau, the difference between a Sinn Fein utterance and the old nationalist Irish oratory, the difference between a speech by Mussolini and a speech by Nitti. These examples of the change in style, illustrating a change in thought and age, can be endless. We, may, or may not, yet have developed a proper style for this new age. But, whatever it is it will not be the style of present fashionable writing. . . .

P.S. More rough and random notes on the above. At an earlier stage, some tendencies in this style used to affect Mr. Ramsay MacDonald in rather a different way. He wrote upon one of my memoranda to the Cabinet, "We will

not be stamped by the hectic rattle of machine-gun prose." As for the political and intellectual pretensions of middle-brow bell-wethers of weekly and "feature" journalism, I agree that some methods of dealing with them may be crude, but feel that something should be done concerning the pontifical utterances from such people, which impress their middle-brow public upon subjects which they really do not understand at all. For instance, my subsequent correspondence with Wilson Harris reveals quite clearly that he was not even aware of the existence of the main authorities upon the subject, when he dismissed me for superficiality in dealing with a matter to which I had, at least, devoted sufficient attention to read all the major works in both English and German.

These little popes really do ask for an occasional custard pie. They do not matter in themselves in the least, but they are accepted as authorities by a great block of representative middle-brow opinion, which lives under the quaint illusion that it is capable of independent thought.

HENRY WILLIAMSON

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W. Montgomery McGovern.

Harrap, 21s.

Reviewing the first volume of *Masters of Political Thought* in *The Adelphi* six years ago, I remarked upon the original and admirable combination of anthology and text-book which it represented, copious extracts from the original writers—Plato, Augustine, etc.—being linked together by a judiciously critical commentary. The second volume, dealing with the period between Machiavelli and Bentham, is nearly, if not quite, as good.

The dominant figures in this period are the "contract theorists," Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau—all three, it is to be noted, products of a "revolutionary situation." The problems they posed and attempted to solve, however, were not prompted simply by the present English and impending French Revolutions. It would be truer to say that both the Revolutions and their theorists represented successive stages in the dissolution of Catholic Christendom.

There had existed in Europe throughout the Middle Ages a generally accepted view of the nature of man, and of the purpose of his life in society. These had been defined by the Church, and the major problem engrossing political philosophers from Augustine to Aquinas concerned the relationship between Church and State. It was

only when Machiavelli appeared on the scene that this view was consciously and consistently challenged: Machiavelli, as Professor Jones points out, marks the dawn of the modern era. He is, indeed, far more "modern" in his assumptions than Bodin, although the latter was born nearly a century later. Anti-Catholicism does not become fully articulate again until Hobbes.

Hobbes' whole theory is based on the assumption that man is a creature of selfish appetites and passions, differing from the beasts (it is rather insulting to the beasts) only in the greater guile with which he has been endowed for the encompassing of his aims. That this is a large part of the truth, Catholic thinkers would be the first to admit—after all, the doctrine of Original Sin can hardly be called modern. Man, the Catholics say (rather more accurately than Hobbes) has been made a little lower than the beasts; but—and this is all-important—in order that he may be placed a little higher than the angels: the condition of such promotion being submission to the Church, as the vehicle of God's Grace.

Hobbes, having to his own satisfaction disposed of both Grace and the Church, is left exclusively with the creature of Original Sin. Therein lies his importance. For, once that premiss is granted, the whole doctrine of absolute sovereignty follows as a matter of course. Even the fact, which Professor Jones stresses, that Hobbes himself contradicted his premiss, when he allowed enough enlightened self-interest for men to agree to the appointment of a sovereign, does not really invalidate his thesis, since he was far more concerned, in the *Leviathan*, to justify the absolute sovereignty imposed by *force majeure* than he was to verify the social contract.

I think Professor Jones overrates

Hobbes' intrinsic merit (he has more sympathy with "modern" assumptions than I have). The *Leviathan* may be a whale of a book, but surely not "one of the greatest ever written by any Englishman"? It stands out in my own memory as one of the deadliest I ever had to read (the more so by contrast with Locke's genial and racy *Treatise*). But there can be no doubt that it deserves the large space and careful scrutiny to which he has submitted it, if only because of its influence upon Rousseau—greater than even he himself was always willing to admit.

For Rousseau, or so it seems to me, accepted *in toto* all that Hobbes had concluded. Man *was* a creature of Original Sin; he *did* need an absolute sovereign to curb his self-interest; he was not even possessed of Locke's "inalienable rights." Rousseau differed from Hobbes in only one single particular—his conviction that, though man was naturally bad, he was also naturally good; in other words, that man had in him a capacity for self-transcendence. This is what differentiates the *Social Contract* from *Leviathan*. Rousseau's main purpose is to show how that capacity can be developed, and so embodied in positive institutions that it may itself become the absolute sovereign.

Rousseau's "general will," in fact, is nothing more nor less than self-transcendence in widest commonality spread: and this book would be valuable if it did no more than refute the prevailing identification of the general will with the despotic will of a majority. As it is, Professor Jones is at his best when discussing precisely this matter.

The general will, he writes: does not demand an almost impossible altruism; it does not exclude attention to one's own interests. All that it asks is not so narrow and immediate an attention to one's own interests as to make any consideration for others im-

possible. What it asks, in fact, is nothing more than the kind of attitude the good sportsman has to his opponents in the game he plays. He plays to win, but, since the game is more important than victory, he plays it according to the rules—i.e., though he wants to win, and though he tries to win, he has consideration for the rights of the other parties to the game.

Likening Rousseau's idea of government by discussion to that of Aristotle, he concludes:

In a word, what both Aristotle and Rousseau have in mind is a government which functions like such a group as the British Parliament or the American Congress, in which a large number of different and diverging interests participate. These normally succeed in amending and modifying any proposal, so that before it becomes law it expresses, not merely the will of some individual or faction, but the common and united interests of the whole.

In other words, the majority must be moved by the thought of not going too far in the furtherance of its own interests at the expense of those of the minority, even if only because it knows that it will sometime itself be a minority. And the minority, on the other hand, if only because it can look forward to the day when it becomes a majority, must give its consent to, and loyally fall in with, measures which, before their passage, it strenuously opposed. So far, in a word, as every member of the group is moved by a sense of fair play, by the sense that he is only one member of a group composed of many members each one of whom has a right to a share in the life of the group—so far as this is the case, we have a general and corporate will which is not in the least incompatible with differences of opinion among its constituent elements. The reason is that we have the consent, in an entirely intelligible sense, of all the members of the group; the consent, even, of those who oppose the measure.

That Professor Jones should thus have escaped the graveyard of political philosophers is sufficient testimony to the merit of his work.

Rousseau's achievement was really to synthesise elements drawn from Hobbes on the one hand and Locke on the other. The twin principles that man is made for the State, and that the State is made for man, are reconciled when man is understood, in the first case as the

creature of self-interest, and in the second as the creature of conscience. Something of the same sort is implied in the neo-Thomist distinction between the "individual" and the "person." Rousseau, in fact, really does more: he synthesises elements drawn from both Catholic and Protestant thought—for the authority which he assigns to the conscience of every responsible citizen is that which medieval philosophers had assigned to the institutional Church.

It is hardly surprising that he occupies a crucial position in political philosophy. He is the filter-lake upon which several torrents converge, and from which fresh streams debouch—streams that have decisively shaped the countries through which they flow. Of particular interest is the one whose course Professor Montgomery McGovern has traced, with loving fidelity, in his book, *From Luther to Hitler*.

This is a really brilliant piece of work, whose importance at the present day can hardly be overstated. What Professor McGovern sets out to explore is the genealogy of the Fascist and Nazi theories of the State, on the paternal side in the authoritarian, on the maternal in the *étatist*, traditions in European thought. It is the first time this has been done fully, partly because, as he himself points out, the "normal" evolution of the world has so generally been assumed, in Britain and America, to be in the direction of parliamentary democracy that anti-democratic theories, and even anti-democratic régimes, have been treated as little more than temporary or reactionary aberrations.

Whatever else the war may have done or failed to do, it has dispelled that illusion, one may hope finally; and by dispelling it, has incidentally brought political philosophy out of the cloister. The issues

dealt with by Hobbes and Hegel are discovered once again to be live issues, demanding lively and serious consideration. Of this new approach to political philosophy, Professor Montgomery McGovern is an outstanding representative. It may or may not be significant that he is more than an academician; that he has a reputation as anthropologist and explorer as well. Assuredly his style combines immense scholarship with a vigour and lucidity rare in any field of study. He has obviously an intimate, first-hand acquaintance with the territory he has undertaken to map—not once does he repeat the popular legends, handed down from generation to generation, about even such comparatively minor figures as Carlyle, or the pygmy populace clustered around Gobieneau. At the same time, he appears to occupy a position of Tibetan detachment. The atmosphere throughout his survey is cool and transparent. In a book written during the war, this total absence of polemical heat or distortion is as impressive as it is refreshing. I think the only sarcastic reference is, characteristically, to Hegel's gratuitous obscurity.

For naturally, the main interest centres upon the German Idealist school. Professor McGovern devotes a lengthy chapter each to Fichte and Hegel: and anyone who has gone through the ordeal of reading previous "elucidations" of these philosophers will realise what an achievement it is to have winkled out the meat of their systems and served it up calmly and intelligibly.

Indirectly, through Kant, both these high priests of totalitarianism were profoundly influenced by Rousseau. But in the peculiar theological atmosphere of Lutheran Germany, Rousseauism underwent an astonishing metamorphosis. No sooner had Kant cleared the ground, than the faculty of self-transcendence was hypostatized; it ceased

to be an attribute of man, and became an attribute of Deity instead. The Deity being furthermore supposed to incarnate himself in successive States, irrespective of anything the individual might be or do, the political moral was clear. By a devious route, German Idealism succeeded in reinstating the absolute sovereign of Hobbes, with only this fateful difference, that unconditional obedience was due now to the State as the vehicle of God's Grace.

The moral remained, even after the theology had perished. It found new rationalisations, more acceptable to a "scientific" generation, in the racialist theories on the one side, the dialectical materialist on the other. Professor McGovern is not concerned with the philosophy of Communism, but he expounds with scrupulous care the various traditionalist, irrationalist and social-Darwinist currents that went to reinforce Fascism and Nazism.

He leaves us to draw our own conclusions. One of these, at least, seems to me obvious: that it is both futile and pharisaical for British and American spokesmen to address themselves to the "re-education" of Germany on the assumption that Nazism was totally false. It was not. Nazism exalted one element of the truth to the exclusion of all else—the principle that man is made for the State. Hence its demonic attraction. It was the element most grievously neglected by a hedonist and utilitarian civilization.

On the other side, the complementary principle, that the State is made for man, has been almost equally over-emphasised in the countries of Locke and Jefferson. It is only where the influence of Calvinism has been a determining factor that the sovereignty of the individual conscience has been upheld. T. H. Green saw this long ago, and pointed the way to a re-

conciliation between Bentham and Hegel. But even he could not go far beyond Rousseau, for Rousseau, the proud citizen of Geneva, was Calvin's legitimate heir.

Professor McGovern points out, *en passant*, that had he been treating of the liberal tradition, he would have had to devote some space to an analysis of the political ideas of Calvin and his disciples in the West. He also draws attention to the fact that both Fichte and Hegel began life as Lutheran theological students. He does not

himself investigate the relationship between Protestantism and modern ideologies. A very valuable study could, however, be made of this subject, and is, indeed, long overdue.

Meanwhile, it is to be hoped that he will devote himself, with the same scholarship and objectivity, to the genesis of democracy and Communism. There appears to be good reason for hope: he is to be responsible for *The Masters of Political Thought*, Vol. III.

F. A. LBA

Struggle for the World

James Burnham. *Cape*, 10s. 6d.

Every once in a while, usually after some world calamity (though occasionally after a national calamity), one finds a writer stepping aside from his natural province in order to comment upon it. So it was that after the fate of Hiroshima and Nagasaki became known, Mgr. Ronald Knox stopped his monumental work of translating the Scriptures in order to turn his attention to examining the atomic bomb and its relation to God. Now James Burnham has done a similar thing: from being the scientific historian of his earlier books, *The Managerial Revolution* and *The Machiavellians*, for one brief moment he has become a humanitarian with a message for mankind. It is true that in *Struggle for the World* here and there the note of the scientific historian is unmistakably uppermost, but taken all in all the book is a clarion-call to man to save himself before he becomes completely caught within the toils of international communism.

Burnham writes as an American first, and a world-citizen second. He sees the present international situation as one which for its solution rests between the United States

and the Soviet Union: between democracy and communism. In his treatment of the problem he regards Russia merely as "the chief base for world communism" rather than as a nation. Unfortunately Burnham's compatriots do not see the problem in the same light, for there is still a large percentage of American opinion which continues to support appeasement of what he terms, "a new form of isolationism."

Those who stand for appeasement interpret Russia as any other country, in fact a country not so different from the United States. The Russians feel the cold as any other people, and if their régime is somewhat of a contrast in government to that of Congress, and even if Stalin can hardly be regarded as a kind of benevolent step-uncle to the President, well, that may be only a national difference. There is a complete failure to realize that Russia is a totalitarian state whose aim is communism; that the natural qualities of her people are only incidental to an oligarchy whose control is so tight that such personal feelings are not allowed to moderate its jurisdiction. Even geographically it is forgotten what effect the plain has upon the people and that, if the summer months mean ceaseless toil for the peasant, the winter months on the other hand

are ones of perpetual waiting: waiting for the snows to melt, or waiting for a lord's call or now the dreaded knock of the O.G.P.U. For centuries the Russian has learned to wait, and it is this characteristic, ingrained in him at birth, which accounts both for his subservience and willingness to wait for the Marxist millennium. It is something which is far too often glossed over by writers and has been the cause of so many journalists giving the impression that it would only need a very minor revolt for the whole communist machine to be broken. In some Republican papers it has been seriously suggested that it might end in a republic being set up along lines laid down by Washington.

Isolationism as it existed before 1914 and during the 'thirties has ended—but only to be replaced by "a new form of isolationism." As Israel Zangwill wrote in 1908, "America is God's crucible, the great Melting-Pot where all the races of Europe are melting and re-forming." To-day the emphasis falls largely upon the "re-forming" because the Americans wish to see their stock as something which has been severed from Europe and which in its new growth must be protected from osmotic contacts through which the old infections might again appear. "Hence," in Burnham's apt summary, "America First and Unique, its own state, not part of any constellation, its destiny untangled with common human fate." Yet Burnham realizes that the time for such aloofness in world politics is over: it can be to no avail. On the other hand the part that he suggests America should play in European politics, as is apparent in his treatment of Germany, is only half the solution.

Writing of Germany he says:

France, since 1870, has feared European federation because she has felt that in a united Europe the Germans would be ascendant. To-day there is no

longer any reason for that fear. England and the United States, along with France, are in a position to control the conditions of federation. . . . The question to-day is not whether the Germans will make another try for European and world leadership, but whether there is any way of preventing the Germans from being drawn into the communist Empire. Let France, if she is worried over the remote menace, two generations hence, of a resurgent Germanism, reflect more carefully on the very real prospect of a united communist Germany, two years hence, at her borders.

So far so good. From this it becomes obvious that Burnham sees the United States in the role of an umpire who by also playing eleventh man may save the rest of the world from the domination of the Kremlin. "The United States alone is capable of drawing together and leading the forces that could prohibit the victory of world communism." Again, so far so good, but it is interesting, as well as significant, to note Burnham's views in the 1940 American edition of *The Managerial Revolution*. There he took it for granted that Germany, which personifies the "managerial" state *par excellence*, will as a result be much more "efficient" than the democracies and so defeat both France and England. Certainly he was half right, and to a scientist no doubt total defeat in 1940 looked imminent. But historically it was not the case.

After the fall of France in 1940 the ordinary Englishman still believed defeat to be impossible. The so-called rather more clever Englishman—often a servant of either this or that ministry—was, less certain: he looked at facts and figures and began to doubt his country's invincibility—an army of Occupation, to his mind, became inevitable, if only for a span of a few years. There were, too, the Left intellectuals who believed conquest a foregone conclusion, if for no other reason than an obstinate reluctance to credit "a capitalist

nation and empire': with the ability to defend itself. Hope sprang from the common stock of the population rather than from the intelligentsia. Furthermore, this hope that asserted itself was part of a heritage manifesting itself and it would probably be true to say that the communal spirit of faith in the past did not become so strong again until seven years later—on the wedding day of Princess Elizabeth. These are important examples within living memory which show how dangerous it is for the historian to base his deductions on either isotype tables or Gallup-poll results. Admittedly in his new book Burnham never goes quite so far without calling in the personal element to redress the balance, but he does frequently, as in the case of Germany, over-rate the power of purely material resources.

It is true that in Germany there is a general opinion that if Germany, and the rest of Europe, are to offer an effective Western bloc against any future aggression, such a defence must be mainly consolidated by American dollars. Scarcely anyone would argue the point, but vital

as the New World is to Europe if she is to remain free, so equally vital in safeguarding her is the Old World. The Germans could not live within a British constitution, nor do they want democracy as the allies know it: what they do want, and what they know can come from Britain, is both leadership and a statesmanship that can give an example to the rest of the world. Britain can act, as it were, as an incubator for the renewal of ideas which have not a history of only a few centuries, but date back to the beginning of Christendom: in spite of the speeches of some of her politicians she does still stand for and give a lead to a policy which is not solely governed by economic forces. The Germans may not have many convictions about England, but that definitely is one of them which in the course of the last few years they have seen confirmed.

Finally, if one sets down Burnham's book unsatisfied, it is because so much in it reads as American hearsay that one fears he may have fallen a victim to the isolationism which he himself so heartily condemns. NEVILLE BRAYBROOKE

The Question of Henry James

A Collection of Critical Essays.

Edited by F. W. Dupee.

Allan Wingate, 18s.

It is clear that a boom in Henry James has come, and that a revival of Meredith—who had sunk much farther below the horizon—is well on the way. The superficial reason for both is evident: the yearning, in a world without values, grim and undifferentiated, for an earlier—though not merely romanticized—world of distinction and distinctions, quality, individualism, hope. We are weary of the penny

plain, let us have the tuppence coloured.

But it is useless to be merely cynical about Henry James, as many of his compatriots and some of the contributors to this book still are. As useless as it is easy. Attacks are levelled less often against the quality of his art, the depth and subtlety of his mind than against the tendency, the social specialisation of the world he moves in and peoples. He was fugitive, his detractors say, over-sensitized and "arty"; and he ended in a futility scarcely to be distinguished from affectation. He endowed the *ancien régime* in Europe with a grace and fineness it never possessed, and grew so enamoured of his own

conception that he ended on a low creative note, lulled by "snobbery." Even so thoroughgoing a student as Mr. Van Wyck Brooks despairs of his last period, treating what was really an organic development as a perversion. But the most effective of these—generally very able—studies, those by S. P. Sherman, J. W. Beach, R. P. Blackmur, Morton Zabel, F. O. Matthiessen, Stephen Spender and Philip Rahv, vindicate the artist in making clear the nature of the man and his high endeavours.

There is no one "question of Henry James": he evokes a myriad questions. Here we must concern ourselves only with one: What is his dominant social idea? As one goes deeply into him one discovers that it is a mistake to look on him simply as a portrayer of manners or as a historian of social phases. As either he has many superiors. He is not content to accept and refine society, as artists so far apart in place and time as Murasaki and Jane Austen so perfectly did. *Inwardness* is James' most salient characteristic, and he cares less for a social order as such than for a setting, a stage, for beauty—an inward beauty. All beauty, for him, takes its life, its vital flame, from relationships, and these relationships, to fulfil themselves, call for a lavish and gracious background.

He craved illimitable intelligence and infinite delicacy. In his books it is always those qualities that win through in the end, though the triumph is generally one of renunciation: Daisy Miller's, Fleda's, Milly's, Strether's, Maria Gostrey's, even Overt's in that last puzzling version of the artist's rôle in life. It is idle to talk of snobbery or illusions when one has to do with a man of such yearnings as Henry James's. Certainly the well-to-do of London and Paris—aristocracy is hardly the word—did not possess all the qualities with which he

dowered them. But it was essential to him that fineness of mind should be where opportunity was, so that fineness could live into its own inner destiny, with as few trammels as might be.

But his well-to-do world was not just a Ruritania for the sensitive. He saw it in more than one aspect, and quite realistically. About Mrs. Wimbush and her kind, Leo Hunters, as it were, seen by a Freudian, he had no delusions. Did not John Marcher and his patient lady in *The Beast in the Jungle* find society stupid, and agree that they liked best to find it so? Still, on the whole he did approve. "Money—to forget money." He asked no better civilization, only the same developed to a finer intensity. This attitude is scarcely likely to be applauded in a highly democratic age. But it is not obvious that fine literature flourishes in a highly democratic age.

In a study of James published twenty years ago and still unrivalled for clarity, Pelham Edgar summarized the matter in a dozen words: "Civilization at its highest pitch was the master-passion of his mind." The setting, then, of the tales and novels was something more than a setting. But the master of subtle destinies and reciprocities does nothing directly to buttress a social order or to cast radiance upon society in the bulk. He does not so much make the life of an inner few attractive as make his own temperament attractive in that setting. He is not only innocent of political purpose; he is without political tendency. His world, the world he likes, remains a private affair. He does not justify. He demands the freedom, the fulfilment of the individual sensibility, but the objective things, though he is glad enough to take them as a matter-of-course, remain, in his art, unessential.

It is sad that, though his work triumphs, his world has vanished.

He died early in the first Great War, and if he had survived it long he would have outlived his civilization also: the golden bowl is broken. It is good to think that he was spared such a fate.

Still, if we are showering valedictions upon Henry James's conception of society, we must keep a sense of proportion. He is not the first or last writer to depict (in being or in dream) a world more inspiring than that about him; any more than he is the first or last

American to be a prodigious dinner-out or to be beglamoured by the aristocratic idea. (Perhaps the idea and the dinners were no better fused in him than in some others.) He has no *philosophy* of society; his true philosophy is a philosophy of beauty, and society is incidental. He has, rather, a social *instinct*. That instinct leads him to draw out the graciousness of all and everything around him and he makes this seem—what it is not—the *summum bonum* of social endeavour.

H. P. COLLINS

The Retreat in Poetry*

The most depressing thing about the bulk of the poetry that is being published to-day is its strident reactionary quality. It is nothing for the blurb to announce, with evident pleasure, that the author has turned his back on the "startling experimentation" (to quote one of them) of the thirties. This can only be a virtue if the experimentation (which is almost certain to be startling, whether it be good or bad—the term itself does not deny its quality) is replaced by something of intrinsic value. But usually it turns out to be a revival of the most arid form of Georgianism. To read such versifiers is to be faced with the serious realisation that for many Eliot and Auden have written in vain and that the criticism of Leavis, Richards and Middleton Murry has had a far more limited effect than might have been expected.

The tradition that these critics attacked, the late Victorian tradition which was embalmed by the

Georgians, was that of the romantic withdrawal into the past or a dream-world. It was a tradition that was dubbed "poetical" and had its own widely acknowledged language and circle of sensibility. It is this sensibility, so tenuous in its nature, that is proving so tenacious in its hold on the modern psyche. It is well, too well, represented here. Miss Wyatt, for instance, is determined to be "sensitive." But the chief ingredient of poetry is something personal to the poet, something that creates its own mode of sensitivity. Miss Evans is under the same curse, the self-imposed necessity to advertise her own delicacy. Her poems merely mark time, and past time at that. They are pleasant and simple but they probe no deeper into life than the average novel. There is no attempt to express, in Leavis's words, "a modern sensibility, the ways of feeling, the modes of experience, of one fully alive in his own age."

It came as a shock to me to find that the best of this bunch was a

*CROSSING THE LINE. By Edward Lowbury. *Hutchinson*, 6s.

NEVER DESPAIR OF GARDENS. By Gloria Komai. *Sylvan Press*, 3s. 6d.

AFTER BATTLE. By James Monahan. *Macmillan*, 5s.

MURDOCK AND OTHER POEMS. By Francis Berry. *Dakers*, 5s.

POEMS FROM OBSCURITY. By Margiad Evans. *Dakers*, 5s.

STARS' ROUNDELAY. By Isabel Wyatt. *Dakers*, 5s.

SANITY RARE. By E. S. Hole. *Allen & Unwin*, 5s.

TO-DAY THE SUN. By Raymond Tong. *Fortune Press*, 5s.

TRANSLATION. Edited by Neville Braybrooke and Elizabeth King. *Phoenix Press*, 10s. 6d.

prize-winner. A compromise prize-winner, who will offend none of the susceptibilities of the committee, is as common as the compromise candidate who is appointed to so many administrative posts. Mr. Lowbury had a share of the £10,000 United Nations' Literary Prize—though not, I believe, the whole of it as the dust jacket suggests. He is vigorous from the word go. He obviously doesn't care how he writes his poetry so long as he gets it down—an initial secret that Miss Wyatt, for instance, hasn't yet uncovered. He has read Auden; and his staccato rhythms and jerky thought even suggests Keidrych Rhys. His language is loose, rough and colloquial, but not always shaped to its most effective expression. (That is to say, he hasn't yet learnt the second lesson of poetry, that the flood must be controlled.) His only unity is one of mood, unless we except his awareness and acceptance of the robustness of Nature. Anything might happen to him.

Miss Komai is very different. She writes poems of suspense, fragments of a frozen world, grouped in static moments. One poem is called "The Night is Greek." There is something of H.D. in it, but with less precision, especially when she introduces abstractions. She follows a persistent formula: closely observed and directly described experience, leading to a far less convincing "moral" or conclusion. The world is contained for her in fruit and flower, not in their growth but in their form and colour. Her poetry lacks the variety, the shock of surprise, which is a mark of the best.

Berry is a problem. Other critics have called him "Gothic" and "craggy," which is true. Like Lowbury, he is rough and aggressive, but he has less control. In his technique he is at the other extreme from Miss Evans, who glides

smoothly on a single-track railway of emotion. Alliteration, internal rhyme, omission of the article, experimental rhythms ("Marine Idyll") and immense compression (particularly in "Mediterranean Year," where the sense is telescoped almost out of recognition) are all part of his equipment. The evasion of the natural word or phrase often submits his verse to an unnatural strain, as here:

Illumined men who, hit, would stoop
Then, falling, let red liquid flow
A smart contagion on the snow,
Decanted from their body cup.

Much of his work is intolerably heavy-handed. The world cries out for a truly modern expression and nine times out of ten gets Georgian or Gothic.

Monahan is a *pot-pourri* of the various poetic modes that have "caught on." His imagery is conventional and he only approaches a half-living verse when he has a definite conceit to work upon and develop through the medium of expanded metaphor. Such, for example, as "Lepidus" (personal ambition), "To Dusk" (love-conspiracy) and "Elegy to a Lady" (memory, age and transience).

Tong often comes dangerously near to empty sentimentalism. His credo, the "passionate love of liberty," is not felt, therefore not passionate: a schoolboy idealism. Sometimes the naivety of his expression enhances the effect, as in "Dragon-Heart." His love poems sometimes have a Shelleyan intensity. He is more robust but less fashioned than, say, Gloria Komai. But robustness easily turns to violence.

Hole is a rum-ti-tum merchant. He surveys life in dozens of quatrains and appears to conclude that the Russians are rather exasperating. His chief mode of expression is the exclamation mark. He manages to work fourteen into one stanza.

Translation would be better if it

had more cohesion. There are over a hundred poems by any author from almost any country—and the effect is like confetti. The best section is the French. There is a superb translation of Dante's "Fifth Canzone" by John Heath-

Stubbs, a stimulating one of Lorca's "Somnambulist Ballad" by Roy and Mary Campbell. Among the others (translators or poets, one can never be sure) there is good work by Honor Arundel, David Paul and J. M. Cohen.

JOHN ATKINS

The Web and the Rock

Thomas Wolfe

Heinemann, 12s. 6d.

The only novelist I know who writes as badly as Wolfe is Dostoevsky. Even Dostoevsky, however, doesn't habitually write about writers: nor does he let himself be carried away by vague rhapsodies on Life and Death and Time flowing by us, by us, by us to the sea.

The Web and the Rock is almost undiluted autobiography. (Incidentally, all Wolfe's novels are.) It is the story of George Webber's childhood and adolescence in Southern U.S.A., his coming to New York, his affair with a talented Jewess many years older than himself, the break-up of the affair, and his trip to Europe. The book ends with him lying in a German hospital after a beerhouse brawl in Munich.

George Webber is quite unlike Wolfe in one respect: he looks like an ape, whereas Wolfe himself was unusually tall and handsome. The ruse is transparent. George is the Eugene Gant of Wolfe's previous novels, just as his spinster aunt is Eugene's mother, and his uncle, Rance Joyner, is Eugene's uncle, Bacchus Pentland. In fact, one would not be at all surprised if some industrious American student had not already made up a gallery of similitudes.

The only novelist I know who writes as badly as Wolfe is Dostoevsky. And Wolfe is the only novelist of our time who has anything like the power of Dostoevsky.

A book of Dostoevsky's is a communication of life. (One might almost say *from* life.) That life comes to you through a cracked and warped channel. It would have even greater impact if the channel were sound and straight. But if he had cared too much about the channel, if his energies had been expended more upon form and less upon content, then nothing might have come through except a faint trickle of sensation. Perhaps it was like that with Wolfe.

Each of Wolfe's novels has a clearly defined central theme. The central theme of *The Web and the Rock* is the recognition of vocation—the writer's vocation.

The writer's vocation is a strange and terrible thing. Very few English writers believe this. The ghost of Oscar Wilde sniggers over their shoulder whenever they take themselves seriously; so they take refuge from the accusation of Bohemianism by calling themselves craftsmen. They say that writing is simply a job of work, that they have chosen it for their career as one would choose engineering or brick-laying. This is self-deception. No one, in the first place, chooses writing. It chooses them. And writing is not simply a craft. Crafts leave the personality alone; they only affect the intelligence, which is impersonal. Writing is a way of living. To write well one must balance content and form. This demands an almost impossible purity of purpose. (There are two classic demonstrations of the dangers which lie in wait for a

writer: Rilke and Rimbaud. Rilke cared too much about form; and in the end became dried-up and inhuman. Rimbaud cared too much about content; and in the end stopped writing altogether.)

To be a writer is in itself unnatural. A writer is a mass of self-consciousness. His whole life is the raw material of his work. He has no moment, no emotion, no sensation which he can call his own, which he can enjoy for its own sake. A writer needs a woman as much as any other man does; and without a woman, or with the wrong woman, he is incomplete; his deepest emotions are without reality. He does not, however, need a woman to help him as a writer. He does not need a woman to give him courage. He does not need a woman as an intellectual equal. He must be self-sufficient always.

Plato explains sexual love by saying that once every human was man and woman in one being. Then they were split into man and woman; and ever since then the two halves seek each other. So to find oneself in loving is more than a sentimental cliché. Each man has his complement—if he can find her. Each man has his private vision of the right woman. (Wolfe does, in fact, invoke this vision most movingly in a chapter of *The Web and the Rock*.)

The writer's—in this case George Webber's—tragedy is that when he is lucky enough to find the right woman, even when the vision comes true, his vocation will not let him love her in the fullest sense of the word.

Esther is the only woman whom George can love because she is the only woman who is his equal. And that is why she is the wrong woman. The true end of their love is for them to become one person; and George can only be himself. To be loved is to be owned by love: George can only be owned by his

art. It is a measure of Wolfe's greatness as a novelist that he presents the issue so clearly and that George and Esther are always human beings and not the factors of a problem, Love versus Art.

If one were concerned with the ethics of the case alone, one would say that George comes out of the affair very badly. He is unfaithful to Esther, he abuses her foully, he ill-treats her in every conceivable way. In the end he simply leaves her, knowing that her heart will be broken. Knowing, too, that he still loves her. All his cruelty to her is despite himself; his human side loves her, his inhuman side refuses to be loved.

The Web and the Rock is a case-history. It is the record of a disease. Wolfe was a great man. He was even great enough to have been a leader. (Perhaps this is what he was really meant for; there must be some better kind of leader than Hitler or Churchill.) He might have been the Messiah who could have saved us. Or, better still, he might have been simply a happy man. The disease said No.

The best novels are written through the senses and the emotions. The intellect merely supervises. And, as I have indicated, the act of writing, in itself, damages the senses and emotions, makes them merely food for words. The writer generally starts by using writing as a special kind of pleasure. This would be particularly true in Wolfe's case; all his prose is actuated by an immense sensuality, a raging love of words.

The next stage is to use writing as a tool. Wolfe had an immense appetite for life. He wanted to know, see and experience everything. His ambition was literally boundless. Boundless; and yet curiously innocent. It was writing that made him cruel and moody, it was writing that left him alone and loveless. What had been a simple

pleasure began to dominate his life. Perhaps his disregard for the ordinary conventions of the novel was a conscious protest against his fate, an attempt to use writing instead of being used by it. This is the only reasonable explanation for his formlessness, in fact; for Wolfe was not, as the *Times Literary Supplement* appears to think, totally uneducated and unself-conscious.

He was to capture the whole of life. That was his justification for everything that he ever did. And in the end, having lost everything, having given everything up—a human sacrifice in the molten bell-metal—he realised that the whole of life cannot be captured, that writing is, ultimately, futile.

We reach for life with all these traps and nets of words, our frenzy mounts up with our impotence, we try to keep and hold some single thing with the fecund barrenness of print, and the sum of it all is a few blown papers in the wind. The possession of all things, even

the air we breathe, is held from us, and the river of life and time flows through the grasp of our hands, and, for all our hunger and desire, we hold nothing except the trembling moments, one by one. Over the trodden and forgotten words, the rot and dusty burials of yesterday, we are born again into a thousand lives and deaths, and we are left for ever with only the substance of our weary flesh, and the hauntings of an accidental memory.

And yet it would be as well if the reader were not to be carried away by such passages. *The Web and the Rock* is prismatic from every angle. It is not simply the story of a young writer. It is the story of America. It is the story of every young man. It is the story of every metropolis. It is the story of one love and every love.

It is a tragedy. The deathwards sweep is there, the certain knowledge of doom. It is the record of a disease. But the disease is magnificent: the tragedy is written in terms of triumph.

J. G. BRAINE

Voyage to Berbera

Alec Glasfurd. Drawings by

Richard Murry.

Sheppard Press, 9s. 6d.

Do you remember what it felt like to be alive (let alone dead) in 1942? Those names that ticked, like an illness one tried to forget, in the back of the head: Singapore, Stalingrad, Norwich, Guadalcázar, Tobruk, Cologne? Already time, that redoubtable old traitor, is pouring gum in the works; and one is left wondering merely whether 1942 was the year one finally stopped being seasick or got that parcel of scarves and sweaters in Freetown from the Girls' Friendly. So, held up against its proper background (which I do not think the author emphasises enough), Mr. Glasfurd's light-

hearted book is an extremely interesting piece of work.

For it was in 1942 that Mr. Glasfurd found himself one of a small party of British officers and men on board the 24,000 ton Italian motor vessel *Vulcania*: flying the Italian flag and bound, via the Cape of Good Hope, for Berbera on the Gulf of Aden. Three other liners and two tankers accompanied them: all specially marked and with similar British guards on board. Their purpose, concluded by an agreement between the Allies and the Italian Government, was to repatriate certain categories of Italian civilians and prisoners-of-war from Abyssinia, which had been freed from Mussolini's rule. Altogether, three such voyages were made: and this book neatly telescopes them into one account.

From the earliest scenes at Gibraltar, where the "Abyssinian Fusiliers" practised the general salute and march past, prior to inspection by the Deputy C-in-C., ("At the short trail, round the General, in semi-circle, move!") to the moment, after semi-circling Africa, of leaving the *Vulcania* and transferring to a British destroyer in mid-ocean somewhere east of Pantellaria, the general tone is light, facile, comic. The author himself says, more than disarmingly, that the experience "fortunately never seemed quite on a par with the rest of reality." I was constantly reminded of conversations I used to hear as I went through the Wardroom to do a bit of cleaning or sweeping. The coloured people of the Cape Verde Archipelago "speak Creole Portuguese and have little to recommend them"; in Gibraltar (a shrewd hit, this) the writing of mail became a substitute for sex; nuns have big feet; never a single complaint was made about the conduct of the British guards off duty, although offered accommodation with partners for the night; but as for the Italians "even a colonial official allowed an unsuitable woman to take him by the arm and call him '*Carissimo Commendatore*'." And sometimes, unfortunately, Mr. Glasfurd's stock of wit and observation collapses, like a kitten who suddenly loses his nerve. I felt sorry, for instance, for the Sons of the She-Wolf when they got a "quite historic rocket" at the hands of Colonel Gracchi for daring to sing a Hymn of Hate which contained "an offensive reference to Singapore and even one to His Majesty the King." But I share Mr. Glasfurd's delight in Italian as the ideal language for official pronouncements. Here is an order of the day:

At the exercises of abandoning ship all will concur with the maximum diligence and sobriety, putting on the girdle of salvation.

Here, too, is a first-rate scene (and there are a score of others) in Berbera, while they were taking on the repatriates:

On the pier we met the largest and most impressive bishop I have ever seen. He had been brought down to Berbera in a special car and was blessing everyone and everything in sight with bland impartiality. Hearing that he was to embark in *Saturnia* I warned Wilkie when I called there that a prelate was just coming out and it might be a good thing if the setry presented arms. But Wilkie was more in the picture than I was. "I don't give a damn for Bishop Whoever-he-is," he declared roundly. "He was discovered with documents in his boots." I asked, fascinated, how anyone had had the temerity to unlace the episcopal footwear on the off-chance of finding documents there. "Of course there was no off-chance. One of his ——— flock gave us the tip."

In the steps of Sir Richard Burton and the poet Rimbaud, Mr. Glasfurd visits Harar, the ancient capital of Abyssinia, and writes a fascinating account of it. And it was this section of his book, where he is not consciously butterflying after a joke, that led me to regret that Mr. Glasfurd had, on the whole, treated his Italians as comic-opera figures. One cannot help wondering what, on the other side of the medal, one of the Italians herded on the lower-deck of the *Vulcania* would have made of the same voyage. I suspected, more than once, that Mr. Glasfurd has not painted the whole of the picture as he really saw and felt it. And, as I read the other day of a distinguished critic usually "careful to guard" against the final effect of his reviews being encouraging, I encourage Mr. Glasfurd here and now to write the rest of his story. It would make an excellent novel.

I particularly liked Richard Murry's drawing of an obese Italian sailor touching up the paint-work and, surprised by an officer, raising his brush "in a Roman gesture." It is a paralysing comment on Fascism.

CHARLES CAUSLEY

The Cosmic Shape

An interpretation of myth and legend; with three poems and lyrics.

Ross Nichols and James Kirkup.

The Forge Press, 8s. 6d.

The main theme is stated in Mr. Nichols' essay, "An Examination of Creative Myth." Briefly, he envisages a new kind of myth reinvigorating poetry and social life (with special reference to agriculture). As the title indicates, myth is linked with the Jungian archetype.

Needless to say, Mr. Nichols acknowledges that a literal belief in myth is impossible to-day; he asks instead, that the people should believe in it as, for instance, they believe in Gielgud's Hamlet; that is, automatically disbelieve on the material plane, and deliberately believe on the symbolic plane.

Myth, therefore, will not be hostile to Christianity (whether Christianity would be hostile to myth in its new form is a different matter). And, brought into daylight, the old fertility cults will lose their sinister character and become, to repeat, drama-drama with the rhythm of the seasons for theme.

All this sounds very well; but exactly how will it be brought about? Mr. Nichols mentions the stage and the sense of play-ritual in children as possible vehicles for his new cult; but, knowing the conservatism of the English theatregoer and the English child, I can only reiterate my question.

I also feel that Mr. Nichols has underestimated the terror which is implicit in all myth—the passion, the panic, the screams of pleasure or pain, the smell of trodden grass and newly-spilt blood. Myth without terror is like tobacco without nicotine: harmless but flavourless.

This brings me to the linking of the myth and the Jungian archetype. Undoubtedly there is a link;

one feels, however, that the authors have not realized how *dark* a science is psychology. Rilke's Hero, I remember, descended "into the older blood, the ravines where Frightfulness lurked"—just as Mr. Nichols and Mr. Kirkup propose to do; but *he* saw the racial memory as being a place of primal terror and they evidently see it as simply a repository of poetic material.

Mr. Nichols' contributions to the poetry section of the book are a long poem ("The Cosmic Legend") and a collection of shorter ones ("The Lyric Shape"). The former has certain lyric power; he has evidently read and digested *Taliessin through Logres*. It is most effective when it is most controlled; as, for instance, in the stanza beginning "The cup is filled the cup has power." It fails when he lets the subject matter do the work for him and falls back on the obvious adjectives (*eerie* dream, *weird* reality). Much the same criticism applies to the poems in "The Lyric Shape"—which are, oddly enough, best when they do not deal directly with the myth, "Celtic Song" and "Reflection" being particularly good.

Mr. Nichols is a mythologist who makes poetry. But Mr. Kirkup is a poet who makes myth. His "Glass Fable," in particular, genuinely possesses that magic, enchanted quality of which Mr. Kirkup himself speaks elsewhere in the book. It deserves a more thorough appreciation than can be given here; but perhaps this stanza will serve as an example of its merit:

Hushed is the simple hedge,
the hunters are departed from the lodge.
Hushed is the gloomy path
where horse and rider pass,
hushed is the grass.

The apparent simplicity of this stanza hides its technical complexity; and its full effect is not felt until the poem is read as a whole.

"The Sleeper in the Earth" has

many felicities—"a shut gate's iron No" and "the wind's open mouth fills to the teeth with snow" are two arrestingly beautiful images taken at random. But it is fundamentally formless—as if Mr. Kirkup had fallen victim to his own fluency. Its concluding line, "there is no real end," offers all too easy a target for critical sarcasm.

Incidentally, there is one approach to myth in poetry which both authors seem to have neglected: that is, its reinterpretation in contemporary terms, as in

The Waste Land. King Arthur is still King Arthur in a Ford V 8; and Adonis is still Adonis if he is killed in a Soho brawl.

But I do not want to give the impression that I consider "The Cosmic Shape" to be a failure. It is both stimulating and original. Its chief fault is that Mr. Nichols' essay is far too short to cover the ground satisfactorily. It is better, though, to try to get a quart into a pint-pot than to get a pint into a quart-pot and water it down.

J. G. BRAINE

SHORTER NOTICES

THE LETTERS OF ERIC GILL. Edited by Walter Shewring. *Cape*, 15s.

If, as no doubt they do, these letters tell all that is to be told, outside the richer narrative of the *Autobiography*, Eric Gill's life was exceptionally and enviably untroubled and serene. He found his own "line" early and followed it happily, with undeviating integrity. But he worked himself very hard indeed. The letters, as a whole, are rather a memento than a revelation of his radiant and unassuming personality. They add but little to, though they entirely confirm, the self-portrait in the memorable *Autobiography*; but they help to clarify some points in his well-pondered philosophy of art and society, e.g. "Capitalist organisation implicitly and Communist organisation explicitly lead to public ownership for private use. This is the exact opposite of Christian organisation. In a Christian society there is private ownership for the sake of common use."

THESE CHANGING YEARS: Notes on Civilization and Revolution. By Bernard Wall. *Harvill Press*, 5s.

An attractive book of penetrating and humane reflections on the spiritual crisis of our time. The first four chapters and the concluding dialogue reveal a high level of awareness, which is hardly maintained in the intervening sections. These would have been better omitted. Mr. Wall is often very felicitous in his critical distinctions. To call Goethe "supple and desultory" establishes confidence. Mr. Wall's main thesis, incontrovertible surely, is that the revolutionary process to-day is universal and all-comprehending, and his sensitive and many-faceted account of the historical prelude to it is remarkable for all that it packs, without overcrowding, into a small compass.

SWISS ESSAYS. By Llewelyn Powys. *John Lane*, 15s.

These essays were written in the last years of the author's life, when he turned his enforced sojourn in the high Alps to the best account, by entering into an intimate friendship with those remote and lovely valleys and their inhabitants. All those who have spent a round year in one of these valleys will find a deep enjoyment in this book: it will awaken precious memories and enrich understanding of a country and a life still filled with natural piety. The brave and tender humanity of the author shines through it all, but nowhere more luminously than in the beautiful sketch of a little boy with which the book begins. The text is illustrated by very fine photographs.

A TRUE BORN ENGLISHMAN. By M. P. Willcocks. *Allen & Unwin*, 15s.

This careful and justly enthusiastic life of Fielding is a good piece of work, in that no one will read it without being more convinced than he was before that Fielding was a great Englishman, as well as a genius. The account of his career as a playwright fills a gap, in our own knowledge anyhow. The book is marred (not very seriously to be sure) by some unfortunate misprints: of which the most memorable are "the first Murderer in *Hamlet*" and "Oh! Altitude." Fielding himself will be enjoying the latter. "Oh! Altitude! Altitude, oh!"

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Lane, 6s.

Mr. Warner's translation justifies itself: it enables one to make a fresh contact with a great drama. It would be easy enough, and quite irrelevant, to make a grievance of the fact that Mr. Warner's diction is very unlike Aeschylus's. What conceivable English diction could resemble it? In Mr. Warner's version the play holds the attention, and holds it legitimately, by the force of its own content.

MAURICE TO TEMPLE. By Maurice B. Reckitt. *Faber, 16s.*

Though Mr. Reckitt modestly maintains that his Scott-Holland lectures "do not provide even an outline of the history" of the social movement in the Church of England during the century from 1846, that is in fact what they do provide. It is indeed distinctly more than outline. It is a very well documented history, though written with a pronounced slant of sympathy—congenial enough—towards the "autochthonous" Christian social policy of the Christendom group. What we miss, however, is a sufficient recognition of the influence upon Christian social thinking wielded by R. H. Tawney. Lesser figures are given more attention.

EXISTENTIALISM AND CHRISTIANITY. By Melville Channing-Pearce. *Ridgway*

House, Shorne, Kent, 1s. 6d.

An essay which makes its good point well: it is that "the existential thinker may not, on other grounds, accept the Christian creed; but if he seeks he cannot fail to perceive that the Christian way of life as revealed in the Christian scriptures and the existential life-attitude are of essentially the same order."

IS THIS THE WAY? A CALL TO JEWS. By Walter Zandler. *Gollancz, 1s.*

This is not another of the intolerant propaganda pamphlets with which we have been deluged for so long and of which we have grown weary. It is a wise, sensitive and moving call to a searching of heart among Zionist Jews: a summons to them to realize the full truth of Ahad Ha'am's moral indictment: "Since the beginning of the Palestinian colonization we have always considered the Arab people as non-existent." It is a very remarkable essay.

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS: A LIFE. By Eleanor Ruggles. *John Lane, 10s. 6d.*

This is a sympathetic, vivid and subtle portrait of the Jesuit poet, whose lovely and rapturous clarities of song—"the carol, the creation"—make a more piercing impact because of the agony of spirit, the continuous self-mortification, which lay beneath them. Perhaps Miss Ruggles takes us nearest to the secret of the beauty and the pain when she quotes Hopkins' letter to Bridges: "I always knew in my heart Walt Whitman's mind to be more like my own than any man's living. As he is a very great scoundrel this is not a pleasant confession."

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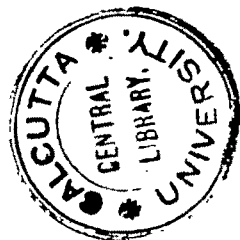
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CONTENTS OF VOLUME 24, NO. 4

JULY-SEPTEMBER 1946

	Page
Editorial	193
Education for Peace (I) HERBERT READ	193
Birth of the Phasian Bird HENRY WILLIAMSON	199
Democracy and the Adolescent JOHN ATKINS	205
The Return ALEXANDER PISMIENY	211
A Friend in Need to Katherine Mansfield	
JOHN MIDDLETON MURRY	218
Two Poems MARGARET GREIG	222
Nursery Rhyme of Innocence and Experience ...CHARLES CAUSLEY	223
A Dream RAYMOND TONG	224
Two Poems BEN VINCENT	226
The Song of the Fool JAMES KIRKUP	227
Evening Ritual CHARLES EDWARD EATON	228
Tim'rous Beastie F. GRICE	229
Caillaux and Flandin MONTGOMERY BELGION	232
Three Poems ROSEMARY THOMAS	241
Three Poems JOYCE CHADWICK	242
Three Poems MICHAEL HAMBURGER	243
REVIEWS:	
John Middleton Murry's <i>The Free Society</i> T. S. ELIOT	245
Osbert Sitwell's <i>Great Morning</i> GEORGE ORWELL	248
Ants Oras's <i>Baltic Eclipse</i> J. HAMPDEN JACKSON	250
<i>Turnstile One</i> CHARLES CAUSLEY	252
Gino Severini's <i>The Artist and Society</i> and Alex. Comfort's <i>Art and Social Responsibility</i> HERMANN PESCHMANN	253
Charles Norman's <i>The Muse's Darling</i> JOHN LE MAISTRE	256

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THE ADELPHI

VOLUME 24

NUMBER 4

JULY-SEPTEMBER 1948

EDITORIAL

THIS number concludes the twenty-fifth year of my association with the *Adelphi*, which began in June 1923. For some time past I have found that the editorial and financial responsibility has made too heavy a demand on my energies. The end of the twenty-fifth year seemed an appropriate moment to bring the journal to a tidy end.

However, my friend, Mr. Henry Williamson, who was one of its earliest contributors as well as one of the most frequent contributors in recent years, has expressed the desire to continue the *Adelphi*. I have therefore gladly made it over to him. It will be published henceforward from Upper Welland, Malvern, Worcestershire, and all communications should be sent to THE ADELPHI—and *not* to Mr. Henry Williamson by name—at that address.

I wish to thank the readers who have supported the *Adelphi* and the friends who have at various times by their generous help enabled me to carry on. In particular I wish to express my gratitude to the late Max Plowman and to Sir Richard Rees, who, at a critical period, relieved me of all responsibility for the magazine.

J.M.M.

Education for Peace (I)

HERBERT READ

Education for peace—this phrase might be used to describe two very different aims. We might mean a process of education designed to make men more peaceful. Such education would have to be reformatory, even, in the psychological sense, a method of healing. But we might mean a process of education designed for men at peace. We then assume that the world has been restored to sanity, and our aim is to keep the peace, to bring up children in a positive frame of mind in social unity and creative activity.

To make men peaceful is the aim of the pacifist; and the pacifist might claim that it is also his aim to keep men peaceful. But the

motives as well as the means may differ for such different ends. We must try to encompass both ends, but at least let us admit that a difference exists between the transitional propaganda of pacifism and the permanent needs of peace.

Pacifism was always an ambiguous word: it suggests a belief in peace, but how can one believe in anything so negative? Pacifism is really based on a hatred of war, but to hate war is an emotional attitude, an attitude which may well be a reaction to experience, but which is no basis for a positive philosophy. War itself is not a simple phenomenon: it inspires comradeship, altruism, courage, many individual and social virtues which are sadly

lacking in time of peace. But war involves destruction, more particularly, the destruction of human life, and that fact is perhaps the fundamental one of the pacifist. His fundamental belief is in the sanctity of human life.

Is this belief in the sanctity of human life rational? Human life is limited in span, and life itself is prolific. Whether one human life extends to twenty, or thirty or seventy years, does not seem to matter much in a numerical calculation of millions. Even when the toll of war is reckoned in tens of millions, it makes no permanent difference to the sum total of human life. Or, to express the same cynicism in another way, it makes no difference to life itself whether a toll is taken in war or disease or famine. War, from the biological point of view, is not to be differentiated from any other check on the propagation of the species. It used to bear heavily on the males of the race, but in future it will show no sexual partiality.

We cannot take the tragic element out of life. But I am afraid that that is the subconscious wish of many pacifists. They shut their eyes to the irrational, the incalculable, the fatalistic element in human life: they long for a dream existence of endless security and love. Such people are not realists; they deceive themselves, and death or disaster finds them unprepared. We may deplore war because it wastes life without reason: but to fear war simply because it brings death a little nearer is cowardice.

The fear of death is the most irrational of our fears, and the basis of our worst superstitions. This fear dominates our lives to an extent which we do not readily admit, and it is very odd that modern psychologists, who have paid so much attention to the equally important subject of sex, have neglected the psychology of death—and this, in spite

of the fact, which Professor Flugel once noted, "that psycho-analysis has shown that in many important respects our attitude towards death is similar to that towards sex."^{*} But as Flugel also remarks in this connection, there always has been a universal conspiracy of silence about death—"an obstinate refusal to accept the fact of natural death and an elaborate structure of magical belief and practice designed to bolster up this refusal—a magic which itself contains the beginnings of the healing art and of the science of medicine."

Freud was an exception: towards the end of his life, he concentrated more and more on the psychology of death, and even suggested the existence within man of a *death instinct*; "whose aim it was to abolish life once more and to re-establish the inorganic state of things." Freud supposed the existence, that is to say, of two groups of instincts: "the erotic instincts, which are always trying to collect living substance together into ever larger unities, and the death instincts which act against that tendency, and try to bring living matter back into an inorganic condition. The co-operation and opposition of these two forces produce the phenomena of life to which death puts an end."[†]

I am not suggesting that we should accept this, or any other theory about death: I am only suggesting that our attitude towards death must be a reasonable one, and that we must take care that our pacifism is not based merely on an irrational fear of death. The calm recognition of the inevitability of *natural* death is one of the foundations of wisdom. That recognition does not imply, of course, that we

^{*}*Introduction to the Child's discovery of Death*, by Sylvia Anthony, London (Kegan Paul), 1940.

[†]*New Introductory Lectures*, London (Hogarth Press), 1933, p.139.

should accept with complacency an *unnatural* or avoidable death: indeed, the right to a natural term of life might well be our main claim.

But I have not done with the psychological aspects of the problem—indeed, let us admit that the whole problem is psychological—whether we look into the individual or into society. But psychology presents us with a dilemma. I think we must admit that Freud and his followers have made out a scientific case for the existence of aggressive or destructive instincts, which instincts are an inevitable consequence of the infant's adaptation of external reality. Further, these psychologists have proved that unless these instincts have outlets, they are turned inwards, with disastrous effects on the rational behaviour of the individual human being. A pacifist who denies the existence of aggressive impulses in himself is merely deceiving himself, and Edward Glover in his book on *War, Sadism and Pacifism*, has taught us a salutary lesson in showing that there is a fundamental identity between *some* of the impulses promoting peace and the impulses giving rise to war. Pacifism should be, not a blind emotional opposition to war, but a plan for making our aggressive or destructive instincts non-lethal. Dr. Jung has recently suggested that the aggressive impulses of the peace-loving Swiss nation are fully discharged in local politics. It is certainly true that the local politics of some more aggressive nations are correspondingly tepid.

I have a considerable respect for modern psychology. Nevertheless, I would like to make one criticism, with particular reference to this problem of aggression. The man of the psychologist is just as much a myth as the man of the economist; and though the psychologists are not so crude as the economists, and have admitted the existence of very

diverse and even opposite types of human being, nevertheless there are certain differences which they have not taken into account. If aggressive impulses are a natural product of the infant's adaptation to external reality, and, whether repressed or active, are an explanation of man's indulgence in war and war-like activities, how does it come about that whole classes of men are decidedly less aggressive than others?

I am not referring merely to national groups like the Swiss, who have a record of limited historical duration, and who would certainly display war-like activities if sufficiently provoked; I have in mind vocational groups which overstep national boundaries, and which greatly exceed the population of any nation. The most significant example is the peasant, the man occupied in the cultivation of the soil.

The peasant is not aggressive—not, at least, in the corporate nationalistic sense which involves men in war. And yet we cannot assume that his infantile experiences differ in any important respects from those of the town-bred proletarian or intellectual, who is such a vociferous militarist when war breaks out. We must conclude, therefore, that there is some factor in the peasant's upbringing, environment, or daily experience which discharges his aggressive impulses, which leaves him in a pacific state of mind.

It is an aspect of the problem which deserves investigation. That it has little to do with upbringing might be shown if we could be sure that country-born people, when they migrate to towns, still retain their peaceful natures. I do not think that could be proved. I believe, rather, that the aggressive impulses of the peasant are discharged against a permanent enemy, which we generally call Nature. The

struggle against weather, against erosion, against weeds, is a struggle which fully engages whatever death instincts the average human being is endowed with. I know that the Englishman who shoots grouse or pheasants, or hunts the fox, is often a fierce and bloodthirsty militarist. But he is not the peasant: it is not the peasant who follows the hounds, but the idle gentry, the retired business-men. The peasant has no leisure for such pursuits: his sadism is fully satisfied in day-to-day struggle with the earth.

It is not, however, the hardness, the harshness, the exhausting nature of the peasant's work that makes him a man indifferent to war. It is something more profound: an active mingling of his body and spirit with the diurnal processes of the natural world. Birth, copulation and death are not mysteries to him in the sense that they are not secret events—they are the daily substance of his life, the events which give rhythm to his existence. Man is, in a real sense, a part of the cosmic process—

Man moulded with Earth.
Like clay uprisen . . .

An ingrained sense of what one might call Mother Earth gives to the peasant a sense of security which is unknown to the city-dweller, whose existence depends on a cash-nexus. City-dwellers, and the industrial proletariat in general, live under the fear of economic fluctuations—slumps which mean unemployment and his social out-casting. The peasant may suffer from fluctuations of prosperity, due to drought or storm; but these are disasters which spur him to further activity, to renewed aggression against the elements. The unemployed proletariat have no natural outlet for their aggressive impulses, and are therefore, as Hitler found, ever predisposed for war.

I do not think that peasants are

the only natural pacifists—artists and craftsmen, all who are engaged in the actual shaping or manipulation of materials, in what we call *creative* activities, lack any evident desire to give expression to their destructive impulses. There may be other occupational groups of this kind; but I don't wish to make too many unwarranted assertions—I am asking for research into these possibilities.

Further evidence could be found by an analysis of vocational groups within the pacifist movement—taking care always to distinguish between the natural pacifist and the pacifist who is merely using the movement as an outlet for aggressive instincts. Equally valuable, of course, would be an analysis of vocation in relation to aggressive impulses expressed in militarism, or in international politics. Admitting that fundamentally we are all aggressive, yet the outlets found for our aggressive impulses vary from class to class, from period to period. But I think we might risk the generalization that wars are always made by 'idle people'—meaning by "idle" people, people not engaged in active muscular work. Wars in the past were made by kings and barons—idle people in this sense—and then by merchants and money-lenders, and now by politicians and journalists, and by the etiolated proletariat of the cities—the clerical and bureaucratic groups which are numbered in millions. War has changed its character fundamentally in the past five centuries, but throughout these changes of technique and incidence, it has always been instigated by people with white hands and clean collars. The peasants and the workers have been the dumb cannon-fodder of their machinations.

There are natural militarists no less than natural pacifists, and artificial militarists no less than artificial pacifists. The artificial

militarist, however, the man forced to fight against his natural inclinations, corresponds to the natural pacifist; and the natural militarist has something in common with the emotional pacifist. Some may resent this distinction between the natural pacifist and the notional or emotional pacifist—the preaching pacifist, as we might call him, to distinguish him from the practising pacifist. But we should not be afraid to take a look at ourselves, to try and realize by what motives, conscious or unconscious, our actions are inspired.

We hate war: that is a natural reaction, especially when we have had a taste of it. Nothing could be more reasonable or natural than the attempt to prevent war, because it can now be demonstrated that no one has anything to gain by war. The most that can be said for war—I think it is the most that the most ardent militarists say—is that we have to submit to one evil in order to avoid another and worse evil. The evil effects of war, it is argued, can never equal the evil effects of a tyranny such as threatened the world in 1939.

Many pacifists—in 1939—accepted this argument. That merely proved the artificiality of their pacifism. They were ready, under the emotional circumstances of the time, to transfer their projected aggression from the general (militarism) to the particular (German or Nazi militarism). But once a pacifist particularizes about militarism, he is lost. He has lost the principle which should guide all his thoughts and actions, which is absolute respect for human life. Preventive wars, defensive wars—all wars are projections of the death instinct, and are therefore wars against life, against love. If peace is indivisible, so is war.

We are not secure in our pacifism unless our aggressive impulses are fully engaged elsewhere—in life-

promoting activities, in life-protecting activities, or merely in mock-destructive activities like sports. It is not a *moral* equivalent for war that we need, but a *physical* equivalent, and it should, of course, be the aim of education and upbringing to give us just such an equivalent. The nature of that equivalent, however, needs elaboration.

The warrior of to-day has little in common with his Homeric prototype—I would say *nothing* in common. He is rarely active—he makes war in an underground office, and his instruments are the typewriter and the test-tube—certainly not the sword. He fights with his intelligence or cunning rather than with any quality we can call valour or courage. He rarely risks his own life, and the only lives that are risked, apart from those of dumb inert civilians, are the lives of a certain number of pawns, moved to and from strategic positions like pins on a map—they have no personal will in the matter, and their only fate is to suffer passively. There may be fine moments in modern war—the Battle of Britain, Arnhem, the invasion of Normandy; but these moments become progressively less frequent, and in the atomic warfare of the future will not exist at all. What is still valuable in military service—and no one who has had experience of it would dismiss military service as wholly despicable—is a certain spirit which emerges from the corporate life of battalions, squadrons, destroyers, etc., rising to noble heights of self-sacrifice in situations of common danger. In short, it is the group consciousness of the Army or Navy or Air Force which endows modern warfare with any lingering trace of glory or vitality.

But this sense of community or group consciousness is not, of course, peculiar to the armed forces. We find it in the coal-pit or the

merchant ship, in the co-operative farm or the college. We can dissociate it from war, and only regret that peace does not at present offer more opportunities for its emergence.

We may go further and say, that although this sense of community or brotherhood does at present find its most open expression during periods of war, in itself it is an expression of the life instinct, of the unitary power of love. It is a manifestation of the erotic impulse in the face of death.

Any equivalent for war, any projection of aggressive impulses in alternative directions, should if possible find a similar alliance with the love instinct, with the feeling of brotherhood. We get something of this spirit in sport—we call it “the team spirit”—but this is generally of very limited diffusion. The team spirit is too exclusive, and like patriotism, is too closely linked with aggressive instincts. The most striking characteristic of “esprit de corps” in the Army is that it is never identified with any “esprit de guerre.” It is not militant; on the contrary, it is profoundly pacifist, and even tends to express itself as sympathy for the common soldier on the other side. I know from personal experience that in the first World War one felt considerably more sympathy for the men on the other side of No Man’s Land than for the civilians at home. I admit it is a little different now: there is no No Man’s Land to separate us from our enemies. The death-grapple is closer, and the distinction between soldier and civilian is no longer so significant.

That difference can be expressed in another way. The war of the

future will offer no opportunity for the expression of any sense of community. Aggression has been depersonalized—that is its subtlest evasion of responsibility. The release of aerial torpedoes, the dropping of atomic bombs—these simple actions—the pressing of a button, the pulling of a lever—give no direct satisfaction to the aggressive instincts. 100,000 human beings may, as a result, have been obliterated, but the button-pusher does not see the result; he can only gloat over the figures in a communiqué. In other words, modern war no longer satisfies the destructive impulse which sets the machine in motion: it merely breeds an impotent rage in which all life and all wealth are thrown on flames which finally envelop the aggressor himself.

I draw these painful conclusions in order to give the right dimensions to the task of diversion, as we may call it. It is not a trickle or a stream which we have to turn into fresh channels, but a roaring flood, a broken dam. Wars have increased in their incidence, scope, and intensity with the evolution of civilization, because that civilization, to an increasing extent, fails to provide natural outlets for the aggressive instincts: war is part of the price we pay for a mechanized system of production, for comfort and convenience and a higher standard of living. If we do not wish to sacrifice comforts and conveniences and a high standard of living, we must devise counter-activities that fully engage the aggressive instincts which are our heritage—the resentful mental wounds which we all receive in the battle of life.

(to be concluded)

Birth of the Phasian Bird

HENRY WILLIAMSON

The frost did not grip the snow long enough for the green woodpeckers which dwelled in the woods and fed mainly on ants, to starve and die. The sea was warmer than the land, and a thawing fog hung in silence over the coastal farms. New growths of nettles arose above the dark mould of the Carr, glinting with pale stings, hollow and pointed, protecting delicate stem and leaf with acid. Voles and mice moved out of their ball nests of leaf and bark fibre in cracks and holes of trees; woodcock flapped their last dusk-flights through the woods, and returned over the sea to northern lands. Owls with feather-horned heads flew among them, dark in the green light of the small moon. The bittern which had stalked among the reeds of the dykes, striped brown and yellow as reeds made feather, beat away to the east, to Holland across the waves, whither before him teal and widgeon had sped, eager with zest of vernal creation. Spiders, exploring the cracks of tree-bark with silken rope of security—as roped men climb mountain crags—moved to the warmth of the sun; tree-creepers, wrens, and tomtits sought them, trilling, piping, whistling as their bodies were nourished for the joys of mating and nesting. Dipping in undulation of heavy straight flight across field and meadow from grub-bored bark of elm to anthill, from anthill to dying beech tree or scoriated ash, the green-and-yellow woodpecker cried his colours in laughing strokes of sound—*yaffle-yaffle-yaffle*—and the plowman following his horses felt easement in his work, and stopped to roll and light a cigarette, to indraw a few puffs of smoke in satisfaction. Already his plow-breast was

scoring better, the rust nearly worn off the iron, so that the furrow was crumbling nicely as it flopped over. At midday as he sat on two sacks in the hedge-bottom, eating his dinner, he noted happily that the furrow-shine was gone off the morning's work, the warmth was making the soil faintly to steam, while his horses munched their armful of over-year'd hay contentedly. The sky was pale blue, with high clouds scarcely moving from one hour to another.

When once more he arose to his feet, paper wrapping of food left by the hedge, to take a double swig from his bottle of cold tea; to roll a fag and light it, the gulls standing about the field, awaiting further furrow-turning, looked up from their midday doze. Soon they were screaming and jostling behind the walking figure guiding the plow by the iron handles, speaking to the horses, crying *coop-yer-hold!* at the higher headland for the pair to turn to the left, and at the lower end of the field, again *whee-eest!* for the slow turn to the right.

Halfway across the field the horses stopped for a rest and at once the spiralling swirl of gulls, which had been flying and flapping and alighting to within six inches of the plowman's heels, drifted away in silence, flying wide and high as individual birds in the pale sky. The hen pheasant feeding discreetly in the furrow a dozen yards from the plow crouched low until the horses began to pull, and she heard again the whisper of iron in the gravelly patches coming through the ground. She had no fear of plowman or horses; yet she crouched, scarcely knowing that she did so. The lower half of

one leg had been broken by shot a month before.

Unknown millennia of Asiatic living, during which human cultures or civilizations arose in cities becoming petrofact and finally decadent upon the soil which had been forgotten as the only true begetter of life, with another two thousand years of northern living since the Romans had brought to Britain the coloured birds of the swamps of Phasis, a river in Colchis—every moment of living thrilled with the need of perpetual concealment, of readiness to run to keep life—were stored as impressions within her blood which thereby held to its own purpose, as a spirit behind the local perceptions of her brain. So she crouched at the innocent passing of man and horses, as the noise of iron share lifting stones and sand came as a rustle, as a whisper, through the expanding pores of the warming earth. She heard, too, the murmur of worms in their galleries; the stir of soil by beetle and wireworm; and she heard the trip of mice feet as two short-tailed voles, flung out of their nest in the rearing furrow, hurried away before the white and screaming descents of gulls. The voles, fat with beech-mast, were dazed by the light; for when their world abruptly had been turned inside out, they had been flung from a sleep of more than a fortnight in their nest of bitten dry grasses, wherein, curled and warm, they had lain clasping one another round the neck with their forepaws. Now as they scurried and tumbled over old frost-smoothed furrows a herring gull large among his smaller black-headed brethren perceived them and on long and narrow wings swept down, and upturning those wings as brakes, dipped to seize first one vole in yellow beak with its crimson spot and predatory tip, to gulp it down its throat, and then, running to the other vole crouching

in the shadow of a frost-split flint, to strike, crush, and swallow it likewise. Thereupon the gull, white of breast and grey of folded wings, stood on the crumbling furrow and uttered a wailing, yakkering cry, as though of complaint that its aloneness was penetrated: the call for mating, for it was not paired.

The hen pheasant, lifting her head, saw the cold yellow eye of the statuesque bird of prey upon her, and liking it not, she leapt up and flew away to the meadow below, gliding over the tall and ragged hedge which grew by the choked ditch which had not felt a spade for over a quarter of a century, ever since the ending of a war arising out of a way of living which had despoiled both soil and peasantry of the mother country.

The hen pheasant soon forgot the former use of her leg, and ceased to notice the dangling and withered foot which dragged as she hopped, sometimes stumbling, to her feeding. She was wary, but not fearful, of the horses and implements which came to work down the furrows of the field whereon she fed with other hens and the cock which never ceased to look around, with raised head, as they moved quietly over the soil levelled and made friable by strokes of harrows and the clanking cylinder of sheet-iron drawn by a bow-bellied chestnut horse. All living things were content in the warmth of the March sun and the windless day. The boy guiding the horse with long lines of rope as he walked behind the one-horse roll whistled and sang for pleasure on the seed-bed. He had just left school, and this was his first job; and to be entrusted with a horse and roll made him feel fine. He followed, up and down the field, the teamsman with two horses pulling two baulks of rank harrows—two heavy frames of iron set with long curved iron teeth for bringing

clods to the top of the seed-bed. The light cylindrical roll pressed the clods to a fine mould.

Leaving the aged Suffolk standing gratefully in the shafts of the roll, the boy went to get a drink from his tea-bottle by his side-bag lying with his coat under the hedge; and the pheasants which had been walking on the soft, worked soil disappeared among the rising nettles above the old ditch, waiting in the tangle of the overgrown hedge until their territory was clear once more. They had been selecting from the fine soil of the seed-bed sharp flinty grit for their gizzards, which ground their food to a fine fluid after it had passed from their crops. When enough grit had been taken by each bird, it walked to the dyke by the Carr to sip water; afterwards to pluck the tips of young blades of ryegrass growing on the mounds of the meadow above the lows where shrinking splashes of water lay stagnant and warm in the sunshine. With the grass-tips the pheasants ate roots of silverweed and buttercup, which they found by scratching at the edges of new mole-heaps lying black upon the dry areas.

At evening horses and men went home, the teamsman riding on the half-bred Percheron mare and leading the old black gelding, while the boy followed on the curved back of the aged Suffolk Punch which had patiently drawn the roll. When they had gone the birds walked more freely about the field, seeking beetles which with the cooling of the soil had burrowed under the surface.

When the dwarf owl began to vaul like a cat from the Carr, and its mate to reply like a peacock, the cock pheasant arose and flew down the field, calling his hens to follow. His roost was in the thick dark-green mass of branches and ivy at the top of the pine, but the hens roosted in the lower branches of

different trees. As a white mist began to spread in layers over the meadow, the cock rose up on his perching branch and cucketted—crowing two hoarse notes in rapid succession—a raucous noise followed immediately by the clapping of wings. Distantly, from other coverts came the challenging cuckets of other cocks. Westwards the sun had gone down small and red in the dry atmosphere, and the evening star hung upon the clear twilight with the thin talon of the new moon. The dwarf owl ceased to vaul and wail; the hollow note of a tawny owl came from the dark silhouette of the wood on the top of the hill; and the stars of night shone upon the earth.

When Harra the Denchman, the grey-hooded crow, had dipped and caved in the treetop, his gesture had nothing to do with the corn-sowing as a means of easy feeding; for the impulse that moved sap and blood and seed was moving all life of the hemisphere. Harra the Denchman had delayed when other hoodies had gone because he was attracted by a female carrion crow in the High Wood, who had played with him but left him the moment she saw a male crow like herself; and now on a warm and lifting wind crossing England from the west the grey crow flapped across the sea to his northern forest.

The vernal impulse came from the sun, lord of all physical living. In tender throaty voice the carrion crow articulated to his mate as she smoothed the inside of her nest hidden in the dense ivy atop a sycamore tree. Glinting low over the river, following its curves under the Carr, the kingfisher scintillated at a sudden rising turn and shot into the wood, flying down a pale green tunnel of branch and twig to his fishing perch over the dyke beyond. His keen whistle pierced the sunlit quiet of the wood, and hearing it

Dufa the ring-dove perching in 'an ash-tree flew out of the Carr, clapped his wings, over his head as he climbed to, stalling point, and dived in a curve to climb again, to dive and climb a third time before flying back to the tree. Joy had uncurled like a spring within the smoke-grey breast of Dufa, urging display unto his mate. The green woodpecker, pushing himself up the bole of a withered tree by the strong pointed feathers of his tail, while grappling the bark with his horned toes, threw back his red head, and cried his yallery-green notes. The skylark, climbing the turquoise air upon a thin chain of song, heard the cry; so did the boy harrowing overwhart with five zig-zag harrows the drills of barley on the Breck. The chains on the swingle-trees jingled; the iron tines of the harrows struck deeper notes from the flints. The work was light, the horse was easy, the day was warm.

Over the central slope of the field the lapwing cleft and swept the air black-winged, crying *pui-wit—pii-o-wit!* while his mate walked in mild distraction twenty yards from her eggs laid in a hollow lined with four fragments of frost-burst couch-grass—a weed dreaded by the farmer, called foul or creeping grass whose white pointed cadets drive even through potatoes in their advance for new territory. The grass fragments had been picked up in her beak and laid there that morning, around the four eggs blotched in black and brown. Several times the site of her nest had been altered: when the cultivator had gone down the weathered furrows, to break them into lump and mould; again when the long recurved tines of the harrows had drawn through the broken furrows, tumbling the clods; breaking some and working others to the surface, while causing particles of soil to trickle into air-spaces below; when the cast-iron cylinders of the

two-horse roll, revolving clankily within the ash-wood frame, in their squeezing angle of curve had crumbled the lumps into loose soil; when the lighter harrows had stroked up and down the field, pulling on top the small clods; again as the light one-horse roll of thin sheet-iron had smoothed the seed-bed; and penultimately when the drill had dropped twenty-two hundredweight of seed-barley into the fourteen acres. Now finally the boy was "crossing the work" with the delicate seed-harrows, light-tined not to disturb the seed or to bury it deeper than the one-and-a-half-inch depth of sowing. His fragile seed-harrows left thin lines athwart the drills of corn in order to deceive the rooks, some of whom were already prospecting in those areas of the field most distant from the working implement. The rooks had not come for barley, but for the wireworms which swarmed in the soil. Even so, they knew how to dig for seed corn when they wanted it; they were in the habit of digging overwhart the lines of the final harrowing—"crossing the work" indeed!—in order to uncover a row or drill of seed, thereupon to follow it up straightly until their crops were filled. Not all the art and mystery of farming was hidden from those birds of immemorial husbandry, the rooks!

Yet the lapwing's four brindled eggs had remained unbroken during the passing of seven implements, ending with the zig-zag harrows pulled by the two old horses called, in many an auctioneer's catalogue, Blossom and Smiler. Each time before iron of hoof or shoe or tool had passed by, a human hand had picked up the eggs, set them aside; and after passing a human figure had troubled to kneel upon the ground, to scoop a hollow, and to set within it, pointed ends to centre, four eggs like small pears blotched by canker; and after each occasion

the mother-bird had, with hesitant pauses to pick up small stones and drop them again in her nervousness, walked to her eggs, gazed at them, touched them with her beak to put them closer together, and then squatted upon them, working her thighs between them to hold them against the warmth of her body within the overlapping feathers. The head of the syndicate shoot had offered the stockman a shilling a dozen for any plovers' eggs he brought to him, provided they were fresh, but none of the labourers, though poor, would take the eggs from the birds, which for centuries had been known to those who worked upon the land, as friends of the farmer.

While the boy was sitting in the hedge and eating his dinner and drinking from his bottle of cold tea flavoured with tinned milk from which the cream had been extracted (the tin sold in the village shop labelled *Not for Infants*) he heard the cry of the male lapwing as the bird swished down at the rooks approaching his mate upon the nest. Swallowing his mouthful, the boy arose with waving arms of a human scarecrow and yelled *Garr-rrt yel* at the black birds. The rooks, knowing the noise to be harmless, took no heed, but walked as before in search of wireworms. But the hen pheasant, wary and nervous with but two millennia of European living in her blood, crouched at the far edge of the field where she was feeding on seed-barley.

Sown at the new moon, the seed chitted soon; and within the second week thin lines of points up and down the field cast a pale green mist upon the soil of the Breck made lighter in hue by the drying east winds, which traditionally were said to be worth a king's ransom because they enabled the work of seed-bed preparation and drilling of corn to go forward without check. April

sown corn in that country of small rainfall rarely established a good plant before the waterless periods of May and early June, which meant loss of the full ear in due season.

The forehead of the cock pheasant was a deep green, and the naked skin around his eyes and sides of his face was scarlet. The feathers of his neck and throat were green, sometimes glowing with purple. The feathers of his breast, plump with good feeding, were a rich rufous hue, shot with purple sheens, and edged with black. His flank feathers were buff, tipped with violet. The eighteen feathers of his tail were dispread and tilted as he strutted beside the hen and dipped to display the gloss of colours upon wing and flank, the olive of tail fringed with shades of reddish-violet and crossed by black and rufous bars. The cock bird shone and glowed with colour as he showed his power and beauty to the near-colourless hens, whose plumage was drab as sere leaves and dry nettle stalks. He jockeyed as he strutted and ran in curves about and about her. The vermilion skin around the eyes lost its scaly appearance and became smoother and wider as the heat of the blood swelled the envelope of the body, until every feather seemed to be iridescent, and the tufts of feathers above the ear-cavities became as aigrettes. To the resurgent feeling of the hen was lured the power of the cock; she ran, she paused, she quatted; triumphant, he trod her, neck extended to peck and hold the featherlets of her crown; triumphant while she received his seed. Afterwards he stood beside her a moment, ruffling his feathers and shaking his wings, a mere bird without purpose, and dishevelled momentarily; then, assuming his normal indifference, he raised his head to listen and to peer, and walked to his own ways within the thicket of the hedgerow. The hen

walked in another direction, towards the Carr:

The same cock pheasant served five hens which roosted in the Carr, and had chosen their nesting places within or near it. The hen with one leg—the other now was withered, hanging by twisted sinew to a healed stump—had scratched a hollow in dark leaf-litter among nettles rising to enclose the fallen branch of the pine tree. She picked up lengths of dead nettle-stalk in her beak and laid them in the hollow, with a few yellow leaves of an old year's growth of ivy. And there her first egg, pale olive green, was laid as the barley points began to open to the blade.

Sand-martins, which a month since had come from Africa to the northern spring with willow wrens and chiffchaffs, flitted over the meadows, thinking of their nesting holes pecked in the face of a sand-pit upon the farm. Yaffle the woodpecker and his mate had spent happy hours striking and prising with their beaks a round hole in the tall trunk of a living beech tree within the High Wood, and digging downwards to enlarge a cavern wherein the glossy white eggs would lie. The kingfisher too had laid her seven white eggs upon the bones and scales of roach, minnows, and water-beetles on the floor of the chamber at the end of her chalkpit tunnel. In the cradle of stick and sheepswool at the top of the ivy-dark sycamore lay the carrion crow's hatchlings, later to be fed on the young of small birds taken from their nests.

Every morning the hen pheasant crept quietly to the nest hidden by tall growing nettles, and laid an egg beside the others. Once as she was about to fly to it from the verge of the meadow, she saw Gallinule the moorcock staring at her: she ran at him and sent him scuttling back to the river. Gallinule knew well the taste of pheasant-eggs; he

likewise knew the richer, orange-coloured yoke of moorhen's eggs, for all was food to Gallinule.

When ten eggs lay coldly under the dead leaves with which the hen covered them as she crept off the nest, a man stopped his car on the road above the river, and crossing a plank bridge to the meadow, approached the pine tree. Parting the nettles with a stick, he peered down and found the nest; and removing the leaves carefully with a twig, he took four of the pheasant's eggs and put them in one pocket. Then he withdrew four eggs from another pocket, and placed them in the nest. And having brushed back the leaves with the twig, he withdrew quietly the way he had come.

The day after the hen pheasant had laid all her eggs, she began to sit, whereupon the cock pheasant ceased to visit her; but he knew where she was, and where the other hens he had trod had their nests. He was the sentinel of the Carr, and not of any particular nid; he was a warning voice only, a grating double-cry among the trees; he was Koch-karr; he was king of the birds of Colchis.

While the hen was sitting, a change took place in her skin, which no longer gave out scent by which stoats, dogs, otters, and other enemies might have been led directly to the nest. The pheasant's scent was absorbed into the intestines, so that her droppings were odoriferous, and not her person. While she brooded the eggs, her blood grew hotter. Through lime-shell and inner skin, both porous, of the eggs, oxygen was drawn, to build upon the plan or spirit of life within, forming clots connected by veinous threads of blood to brain and gill and reptilian shape. Each egg carried the racial history of the Phasian bird, from its inception within the cooling vapours of crea-

tion, from amoeba to fish-form, thence to reptile that crawled from water to land and arose on hind-feet to run; and from running developed the sweeping flaps of skin upon its arms which increased to vanes and finally, taking to itself light and colour and reflection, breaking into feathered flight, triumph of celestial artistry which strove sempiternally with the sun against the forces of negation and darkness. Within each egg phases of racial history succeeded one another, moved by the heat of the bird sitting day after night and night upon day: millennia upon millennia swept in solar ghost and phantasma as fossils in the rocks of Asia, in time measureless to man as sunlight glinting in the sands of Colchis; and so, in twenty-four days, to the final design—a feathered chick, with eyes, brain, heart, kidneys, liver, and belly that was the absorbed yoke-sac, tapping and chipping with the horny nib upon its upper mandible around the wider end of its shell for the final leap from darkness into light.

The hen covered the eggs, giving of the warmth of her body, shifting carefully as slight cheepings arose with little movements under her. She hearkened to the chipping within the shells, and settled closer with love and anxiety.

Of thirteen eggs, eleven hatched. The hatchlings broke their way out of confining shells, and lay, wet and fatigued, in the nest. All day the hen covered them, while they slept, and their featherlets dried.

The bird within the twelfth egg was smaller than the others, and had not the strength to force its way out when, towards noon of the following morning, the hen, clucking softly and tenderly, moved away from the nest with her dappled, speckled chicks. So it slept, or languished, in the darkness of its cavern, and soon lost vital heat and ceased to cheep to itself, and its movements ended. By the thirteenth egg, which was infertile, the chipped egg lay, and the dews of evening settled on its coldness.

Democracy and the Adolescent

JOHN ATKINS

Democracy cannot work without the right people to work it. This does not imply the existence of an *élite* (which would mean aristocracy) nor can democracy rely on the activities of a ginger group. It requires the active co-operation of every individual in every section of the population. It is the loftiest political conception yet produced by the mind of man and so far, despite two periods of keen debate on the needs of democracy, only a very slight approach has been made towards its realization. Under modern conditions the ideal of

democracy has brought in question the whole of our educational system and has been largely responsible for its extension and an increased interest in further and adult education, areas previously left untouched. Present-day needs have also brought a universal awareness that the practical results of our educational system have been disappointing. The position is the more bewildering because its remedies are almost completely unknown. Theoretically it is possible to state what is wrong, what is lacking and what is needed, but the difficult

business of practical application still remains a tentative groping in the dark. In this there is a clear contrast with political and economic reform, where practical application usually follows closely from the theoretical proposition. If economists decide that the rate of interest on loans is insufficient to encourage such loans, the remedy is obvious. But when educationists decide that an educational syllabus is too narrow for its purpose they are still left with the difficult question: *how* is the reform to be made effective? It is the gap between theory and practice, not the inadequacy of the theory, that renders so much of our educational system abortive.

The popular view is to blame the system, the administrators, the teachers, the government, the textbooks, the premises, shortages, overcrowding, etc., all of which play their part. But the human material, the child, is rarely blamed—partly for sentimental reasons, partly because it is realised that a child cannot bear full responsibility. Yet it is unwise to pretend that a child can do no wrong. This kind of idealisation makes the teacher's task more difficult. It is better to be blunt and to acknowledge that the modern child is not only very different from its parent or grandparent in their childhood, but in some ways inferior. I do not wish to use the word "blame" in any pejorative sense. I am looking for the responsibility, a shared responsibility no doubt, for a particular circumstance, and I am suggesting that part of it is to be found in the child itself. This will be unpopular with the sentimentalists but essential to all genuine educational reform.

Knowing that democracy is in crisis, and only partly sure of itself (unlike the more extreme political systems) it is necessary to seek out the points at which a curative remedy can be applied. One of

these is obviously education. It, is coming to be realised, however, that education is not a watertight compartment, cut off from an activity or experience called "life." It will be necessary, for the time being, to retain the term "life" to denote that which goes on outside the school and the home. It is that sector of our experience which brings us into a *social* relationship with our fellows; it is often competitive but it may be co-operative; it also involves the activity of earning a living, with the high degree of self-respect and self-confidence that this involves (or should involve). Because "life" does so predominantly imply earning a living, it is inevitably felt to be distant from normal school activities. Education has been "a compartment of life, because the school and the world have become two categories not complementary but rather opposed to each other."*. The "world," where "life" goes on, is felt by the average schoolchild to be more real than school. There is little doubt that he has been encouraged in this dichotomy by his elders, who have not hesitated to inform him that school is really a preparation for "life." It is little wonder that to most people school represents a rather inferior phase of personal adaptation for the really significant world.

This false attitude becomes of immediate importance as soon as the educational system is extended to include adolescents already engaged in industrial occupations. In the planned County Colleges and in the existing Day Continuation Schools it is one of the major obstacles to the possibility of true education. The students themselves are encouraged to put a quantitative value upon their school-work, arising out of the four or four and

*Karl Mannheim: *Diagnosis of Our Time*.

half days spent in the factory and the one day in the school. An untrained mind (and the product of our primary schools is woefully untrained) will immediately accept a four-to-one valuation of the factory-school relationship. "Nine times out of ten education will be defined as a preparation for something else, concerned not with what is happening now but with what will be happening two years hence: it is a 'preparation for earning a living,' or a 'preparation for citizenship,' or (the least illuminating of all) a 'preparation for life.'"^{*} It is all the more encouraging to find the Director of Education for Westmorland stating that he is alarmed "at the prospect of education producing a good citizen—that we should go to the trouble of thinking what sort of citizen society would need in ten or twenty years' time, and turning them out of a machine. That was just what Hitler did. It was dangerous to aim at producing any political types. We wanted good citizens, but that should be a by-product. We should train children to be better human beings rather than better citizens."[†]

At this stage it would be well to forestall a possible confusion. My introductory remarks may have led readers to believe that I am mainly concerned with the educational necessity of producing good democrats. This is true so long as a "good democrat" is not understood in the same sense as a "good fascist" or a "good communist." In the two latter cases the aim is to produce a political type, irrespective of its value as an individual human being. But in a true democracy the best citizen is the best human being,

his citizenship being expressed in terms of human, individual value. This is, after all, what Trevelyan said. The aim should be to encourage children, later adolescents and finally adults, to find fulfilment in the full use of all their powers and faculties. The democratic faith, something quite apart from representative government and administrative methods in themselves, is that this type of person will solve his social problems *en passant*...

What are the qualities that a successful democracy needs in its citizens and which, *ipso facto*, should be fostered by the schools? They are tolerance, imagination and a sense of responsibility. I do not include that old chestnut of democratic theorists, the ability to lead and the ability to select leaders, because it follows from the faculties I have set forth. In my experience as an assistant master at a day continuation school^{*} I was able to watch for any signs of these qualities among the students. In almost every case they were lacking. There was rarely either willingness or the ability to entertain a point of view alien to their own very limited experience; they expected not only to be led but to have things done for them, even the most elementary things.

This lack may yet destroy our efforts to establish a truly democratic system. It is more dangerous than the stranglehold of a bureaucracy on the workings of a social economy or the challenging existence of a Fascist government in Spain; in my view it is quite as dangerous as the threat of the atomic bomb. Intolerance and lack of imagination together produce the mob on which tyranny thrives, and the lack of responsibility gives tyranny its opportunity. But how

^{*}H. C. Dent: *A New Order in English Education*.

[†]John Trevelyan, in a letter to *The Times*, 4 January 1945.

^{*}An account will be found in *Pilot Papers*, December 1947.

are our people, especially our younger people who will be politically important during the next decade, how are they to realise the faculties that so far no doubt exist but certainly lie dormant? The primary schools have failed. Originating from mixed motives of fear and philanthropy, the necessity to de-barbarise the illiterate and the desire to improve their religious and moral status, they were later geared to an industrial economy. The system reflected a competitive society. While children are still subjected to this kind of motivation through eleven years of primary and secondary schooling it is too late to change its effects in later years, except in a very few cases. Having learnt to measure situations and events in the light of competitive value, they are utterly unable to substitute a co-operative value or even one that is simply constructive. "It is absurd to assume that children trained in their school life to accept values based on self-interest and competition are likely to understand their responsibilities or value the privileges of a society based on the common good when they reach the adult stage."* Yet the competitive system has some saving graces on which a nobler one might be built. It is a two-handed activity, involving both construction and destruction. It is therefore surprising, on the face of it, that the products of a competitive system should be as lifeless, sluggish and unenterprising as they are. It suggests that we are wrong in our emphasis on the competitive character of our society; what is far more important in this context is that the workers have no compelling interest in their work and that it makes no demands on their mental capacities. In the labour market life is competitive, although even

this characteristic is now disappearing. In the factory the worker rarely competes with anyone (he may, at the time of writing, have a target to aim at) and he approximates more closely to the Marxian conception of a wage slave. The competitive society, with all its good and bad points, is being destroyed. In its place is being established a society based on mutual agreement. And for the industrial worker the landscape of his labour relations becomes featureless, unstimulating and dull. This is the situation for which we must plan and legislate. The weakness of much of our present planning and legislation is that it is intended for a class of individual who is on the way out.

The modern worker is suffering, in a way he does not understand, from contemporary economic security and improved conditions. I would not make out a case for bad conditions in industry but they did at least in the past urge many workers to mental efforts which are inconceivable today. Cobbett's cheap edition of the *Weekly Political Register*, consisting of Addresses to Journeymen and Labourers, sold 40-50,000 copies at a time when the population was considerably smaller than it is now. The literate population was smaller still. Very few political reviews today can claim such a readership, and hardly any of them are directed to the working class. It would not be worth the publisher's while. The Mechanics' Institutes, founded by Dr. Birkbeck in Glasgow, spread by 1851 to 600 institutes, with 600,000 members and over 16,000 students. It was the Mechanics' Institutes that inspired William Lovett's passion for education. The Rochdale Pioneers established an educational fund and counted education as one of their principal objectives. The efforts made by many of the working class leaders

*Ernest Green: *Education for a New Society*.

to educate themselves, to make themselves fit antagonists for their enemies in the middle class, are scarcely credible today. Francis Place, for instance: "My desire for information was, however, too strong to be turned aside and often have I been sent away from a book-stall when the owner became offended at my standing reading which I used to do until I was sent away. . . . I used to borrow books from a man who kept a small shop . . . leaving a small sum as a deposit." One comes across the same passion for enlightenment in large numbers of these people who had been denied a privilege that has today become a right. There was the Chartist Cooper: "Historical reading, or the grammar of some language or translation was my first employment on weekday mornings, whether I rose at three or four, until seven o'clock when I sat down to the stall . . . breakfast gave me another half hour's reading. I had another half hour or sometimes an hour's reading or study of language from one or two o'clock at dinner time. I sat at work until eight, sometimes nine at night. I then either read or walked about our little rooms and committed *Hamlet* to memory or the rhyme of some other poet, until compelled to go to bed through sheer exhaustion."

Of course, a lot of this effort was wasted, misplaced. Place wrote of his "desire for information." This conception of education is a primitive one, though still strong among the ill-informed today. Yet with a passion such as these men had they could overcome almost any disadvantage. They had the kind of creative, forceful minds that automatically turned everything to good account. And it is just this passion and the kind of mind that houses it that is lacking today. We hear a lot about incentives and stimuli and often we suspect that the arguments

do not spring from the best motives, but undoubtedly their lack is a major deterrent to the education of adolescents. Unless the adolescent can be made to feel, firstly, that his work is important and a vital part of the nation's development, and secondly, that his school work is neither a luxury nor merely an accessory to his other work (what he will call his "real" work), he cannot be expected to exert himself in the pursuit of either. But there are many pitfalls. There are a hundred propagandists who would be only too eager and competent to persuade the young worker that his work is important, even if it consists only in seeing that a machine maintains a certain number of revolutions. This would only defeat the educationist's purpose and confuse the worker. It may be found, especially as industrial processes grow simpler (apart from a few highly skilled functions of maintenance) that it is impossible to avoid the monotony of machine-minding. This is one of the important decisions facing the educationist: whether work is of such a character as to be worth integrating with other, more demanding activities, or whether it should be ignored (and kept down to a minimum) and regarded as the worker's debt to society.

It is a highly complex subject and I am already becoming too involved, too much concerned with details, for the space of a short article. I must confine myself to generalities. When considering anything to do with education one must take into account the temper of the age. There is always a time lag of several generations between the beliefs and outlook of the educated, cultured portion of the population on the one hand and the mass on the other. Today there is an increasing flexibility in the outlook of the former group compared with its intellectual constitution before, let us

say, the first World War. It is because of this that the discussion on educational aims and requirements is conducted at such a high level, as reflected in, for instance, the Ministry of Education's own pamphlet on the education of adolescents, *Youth's Opportunity*. But the mass of the population, from whom the students come, are at quite a different stage of development. They have far more in common with the educated minority of the Augustan Age, which enthroned Reason, Indifference and Materialism. There are some people who would deny the place of Reason in the affections of the mass; they are said to be irrational. And so they are—in the mass, like the House of Commons and the Council of the British Medical Association. But individually they are capable of a reasoned argument. They cannot understand poetry, apart from thinking it "sloppy." You can win a normal man to your point of view by arguing that it is reasonable; you will only antagonise him by expatiating on its imaginative power. Indifference is more common in this country than in the more heated continental environments; it is the special democratic vice. The under-educated to-day share these attitudes without understanding the premises that made them acceptable to the Augustans. When he felt that the suffocating authority of Reason was at last shattered Blake wrote these lines which have just as much point today:

Youth of delight, come hither,
 And see the opening morn,
 Image of truth new-born.
 Doubt is fled and clouds of reason,
 Dark disputes and artful teasing.
 Folly is an endless maze,
 Tangled roots perplex her ways.
 How many have fallen there!

They stumble all night over bones of the dead,

And feel they know not what but care,
 And wish to lead others when they should be led.*

In general, it is impossible to disagree with the needs of the student which the Ministry sets forth in its pamphlet. They are that he must feel he has a place in the community, that he requires a satisfying relationship with the adult members of the community, and that he must feel he is attending college for a well-defined purpose. But then comes the stumbling block. How are these general lines of advance to be translated into practice? I cannot pretend to answer this. It does seem fairly certain that the only thing to do is to allow each Principal to experiment in his own way. The only cut-and-dried directive that can be given is that the Local Education Authorities should not interfere with the work on the spot. In fact, the best contribution the L.E.A.'s can make to the solution of this problem is to clean up their primary and secondary schools. For after all, it is only in these that children can be encouraged to exercise their imaginations and see the virtues and necessity of tolerance, and without these qualities they will not become individuals of worth nor will democracy be allowed to function. The other thing, a sense of responsibility, must start in the nursery, and as the provision of nursery schools is growing there will be great opportunity. All of us have rights but too many people are being brought up without any conception of duties. This has nothing to do with the State. It is merely a case of living together in harmony.

*William Blake: *The Voice of the Ancient Bard*.

The Return

ALEXANDER PISMIENY

It seemed unbelievable that a man who had been buried for hours should still be alive. One of the soldiers beckoned to his comrades and they unearthed Shurigin.

Jacob Shurigin came back to consciousness in the medical tent. Later, in the military hospital, his leg was amputated above the knee; his arm was saved—it had been wounded at the shoulder—but it gave him much trouble, as the wound would not close for a long time.

Shurigin underwent prolonged treatment in various hospitals, until at last he was discharged. His army career was over, and he was free to go home.

He travelled from Iaroslavl across the whole country, wondering all the way what his life at home would be like now.

A young lad from the Leningrad front who was going to Aktiubinsk was travelling in the same carriage. He was very young, and there was an expression in his eyes as if he had been astonished and frightened once and for all. His damp, fair hair fell over his brow. This lad too had just left hospital, where his leg had been amputated. Quite a long time had already passed since the operation, but he still could not forget the sufferings he went through. In two days he had not spoken a single word to his fellow passengers. He lay on the upper sleeping berth, and even ate there.

But in Rusaiewka the boy descended from the berth, went to the station, procured half a litre of vodka at the station market, got drunk and started cutting loose. "Where are you, my golden-hills?" he vociferated, tearing open his military tunic, throwing away his crutch and breaking into bitter tears in a paroxysm of despair.

Gloomy, his thin, bleached eyebrows knitted, Shurigin watched him from the window. He felt no pity for the lad. "No, I shan't be like him," he thought. "Anything but that!"

The well-fed stewardess got down on to the platform from her post near the steps of the carriage, and dabbing tears from her plump cheeks, approached the boy.

All the way she had quarrelled with the passengers, nagged them because they made the carriage untidy and drank too much tea, for which she had to fetch the water from the boilers on the stations, but now even she was touched. Looking at the boy Shurigin was humiliated. The sight of such complete loss of self-control filled him with shame, and the idea that he might behave in the same way frightened him.

The stewardess and some of the passengers wrestled with the boy, trying to get him back into the carriage. The bell had already rung twice, but the invalid was still thrashing about and pushing them away. His tunic and shirt had come out of his belt, uncovering the pallid skin of his heaving belly. Smearing the tears across his face, the boy babbled with heavy, drunken tongue that he had a young wife at home. She would not want an invalid, who would? "Life is cheap these days!" he shouted. "Life is a bargain, you can keep the change." The boy was muttering the very same thoughts that tormented Shurigin, and this only served to increase the enmity he felt towards him. "No" Jacob kept saying to himself, "I shan't be like him. Anything but that!"

Jacob Shurigin left the train at his station, where he had to wait for a lorry which would take him to his native village. He looked stealthily at every one he met,

hoping and fearing to see a familiar face. On the one hand, he was anxious to see somebody he knew, whom he could ask about his home village, from whom he could hear some news of his family, but on the other hand he was afraid of sympathy and compassion, even if these feelings were not expressed directly. The image of the boy with the damp hair was still before him.

On the square in front of the station Shurigin looked long at the old fountain, the broken fence around the small public garden and the dusty foliage of the trees. Everything was exactly as it had been the night he left. The same flat stone lay before the fountain, white goats wandered among the trees—just as before. An old tree with a cement filling in its hollow trunk spread stiff branches as of old above the dry and dusty earth. Nothing was changed here, it was Shurigin who was changed, and therefore the square seemed to him smaller than it had been formerly, the trees seedier, the fountain less beautiful. Shurigin's thoughts returned to his meeting with his family—it would be soon now. Every soldier dreams about this meeting all through the war, and the soldier Shurigin too had dreamed about this meeting and feared it ever since he had been wounded.

In civil life Shurigin had been a musk-rat hunter on a big collective farm in Syr-Daria. It was a new trade of great promise. The reddish, nut-brown animal, as big as a small rabbit—the musk-rat or musquash—has a light, warm, hard-wearing fur, it is not exacting about its food, breeds rapidly and lives in otherwise valueless swamps, lakes and waste lands. It is for all these qualities that it has been imported into Soviet Russia from North America. But the calling of musk-rat hunter demands strength and

agility. And what if the hunter has only one leg?

On the spot where he used to stop in the old days to wait for a lorry, Jacob Shurigin lowered his knapsack.

Two members of a kolhoz were already waiting for the lorry in the shadow of a locust-tree, a woman in a white shawl and a full old-fashioned skirt, and a man wearing boots and a mackintosh. Shurigin cast a stealthy glance at them. No, they were unknown to him. The noise of the lorry was heard around the corner, and it turned into the main road. The kolhoznik raised his hand, and the driver braked. The woman lifted her bag over into the open lorry and gripped the side with her hand, preparing to climb in, but then she looked at Shurigin and hesitated.

Seizing the side of the lorry, Shurigin threw his knapsack into it, but could not swing himself over. His left arm did not quite obey him, his crutch hindered him. He made a jump, and the crutch fell. The woman took him under his arm. She did it silently. The kolhoznik propped Shurigin up from the other side. Shurigin cast a look of hatred and rage at the woman, at her quiet, good face with a homely birthmark and moved his shoulder violently, trying to free himself. The woman looked him full in the face, without letting him go, astonished. The man quietly withdrew his hand. Shurigin jumped again, this time succeeding in swinging himself over the side. The woman picked up the crutch, threw it into the lorry and climbed over. The kolhoznik jumped in when the lorry was already in motion.

Fields of rice ran past the lorry, divided into squares by the black lines of irrigation channels. Shurigin sat on a bale, with his back to the driver's cabin and looked out. "Not to be able to climb into a lorry!"—he kept saying to

himself, enraged and embittered. The woman was telling the man how she had sold a heifer.

The moment arrived which Shurigin had been looking forward to from the very beginning of the war and which he had been fearing ever since he was wounded—he was at home.

With throbbing heart Shurigin pushed the wicket door and entered the courtyard. An unknown kazakh collie with clipped ears jumped at him. Shurigin retreated to the wicket gate and lifted his crutch. "Strangers are in my home," was his first thought. "Then where is my son, my wife?"

Looking past the dog, which kept watch over him without barking, Shurigin examined the courtyard. It was cleanly swept. Among the trees washing was hanging on a line.

A boy of six came from behind the hedge. It was Pavlik, Shurigin's son. Shurigin knew him, but not before he had recognised his wife's blue cotton apron among the washing on the line. It was when he saw this blue apron that Shurigin realised that this boy of six was his son.

"Who do you want?" said Pavlik, driving away the dog.

Inwardly Shurigin was smiling, but not a single muscle moved on his harsh, darkened face. Silently he made a move towards his son. The boy examined him fearfully, his face, his crutch, the stump in the tucked up leg of his trousers. The boy retreated. "Pavlik" muttered Shurigin with grey lips, and stretched out his hand.

The boy turned and ran away.

"Who is there, Pavlik?" Shurigin heard his wife's voice asking. But still he did not move. It was as if the voice of Olga reached him from another world.

Then Olga came from behind the corner of the house. Her hands were damp with washing. She

stopped dead for a second and then rushed to Jacob with a faint cry.

There was nothing in her bearing to show how hard it was for her to meet a maimed husband. As if she had never expected anything else. As if this was the only possible way of coming home. As if she had always known that he would come back worn out, dark-faced, grey-lipped, taciturn and grim.

But her tender feminine guile did not appease Shurigin's uneasy vigilance. He did not attempt to analyse his feelings. His wife could cry over his mutilation, or pretend not to mind it, she could pity him, or try to dissipate his gloomy thoughts. Try as she would, she could not extinguish his pre-conceived self-mistrust. Shurigin entered his home with a malaise of strain and dull embitterment. It was deeply rooted in him now, and nothing, neither sympathy nor indifference, neither pity nor love, could eradicate it.

Friends and cronies came to see Shurigin in the evenings. Sometimes Jacob and his wife went to see them. Considerable quantities of vodka were consumed, many friendly things were said. They asked Shurigin about the war, about the Germans, how he was wounded, how long he had been ill, what the journey had been like. But neither the generous attitude of the administration, local and district, nor the kindness of his comrades and the tenderness of his wife and son—admirable manifestations of human sympathy though they were—could bring relief to his tormented heart.

Kindness bestowed upon Shurigin weighed hard on him. In the small village he was the first to come back from the war. And his idleness hung heavy on him. His comrades talked to him at times about work. The manager offered him administrative posts. But days passed, and languishing in idleness, feeling himself

deprived of his share, Shurigin could not come to any decision.

Then one day Shurigin went to the office of the musk-rat farm to claim his old job back. He wanted to start in civil life exactly where he had left off at the beginning of the war.

Sullen, stern and resolved, he entered the office. He could be appointed district manager, he could find employment even in this same office. To be keeper of the store, for instance, what would be wrong with that? Shurigin was far from being sure that he was fit for his old job, but just because of this doubt he was firm and indomitable in claiming it back. He wanted his old job, nothing but his old job. He must get it, even if he had to bring the matter to court.

It was exactly as Jacob had figured it would be. The manager, the planner, the inspector of the biggest hunt-district, all backing each other up, word for word, tried to dissuade him and make him understand that hunting was too difficult for him now. "Don't forget," they said, "you're still in poor health. Look at your face in the mirror." Shurigin was prepared for these objections and held out.

Since the days of his boyhood he had been familiar with the free and strenuous calling of hunter. Nobody was better aware than he of all the unexpected difficulties a man was apt to run into when hunting.

Once, for instance, not long before the war, he had lost his way in his boat and spent a whole week in the reeds trying to get out.

It had happened quite simply. He had spent the night on the lake. That night a strong wind tore away the buoys along the shore and near the sand-banks and completely changed the configuration of the reed thicket. The narrow passages in the thicket of reeds, which he could pass through blindfold, had been closed, new passages had

come into being in their stead, but they did not lead to the places Shurigin wanted to reach. On the third day he was running short of bread, sugar and salt. The night before the fourth day his light craft overturned, and he was left without matches and without gun-powder. He ate raw meat and shivered at night, unable to make a fire.

Could he stand such a trial now?

Another experience when he had had to be quick and clever came to his mind. He was eighteen then, but every detail was still fresh in his memory. He was riding to the district centre with his father and his elder brother. They were just fording a nameless stream, one of those which abound in these places, when a snow-panther, frightened by the splashing and the human voices, came out from the reeds with her whelps. Shurigin's father and brother turned back their horses, and Jacob found himself face to face with the panther. The animal crouched, showing her teeth. Jacob just managed to get off his horse, when the panther leaped at him. Crouching and shielding his face with his arm, Jacob opened the belly of the animal from gizzard to groin with a single stroke of his knife.

Could he do it now, on one leg?

He recalled still another occasion on which he had had to use all his strength. He was on a boar hunt with a comrade. They were spending the night in the reeds, and his comrade had decided, though it was forbidden, to leave what was called a "watching gun" overnight—a gun set up on the boar's path, loaded and cocked. If the boar comes down the path it springs the trap and the gun goes off.

A shot awakened Shurigin in the night. His comrade was not beside him; He called him, but there was no answer. Shurigin went to look for him. He heard him groaning, and found him lying on the boar

path with the whole charge of duck-shot from his own "watching gun" in his belly. It was some 12 kilometres to the next village, but Jacob did not want to run the risk of leaving his badly-wounded comrade alone in the reeds. Forcing his way through the narrow, weedy passes he carried his comrade to the village, bringing with him besides the two guns and two knapsacks.

What would he do now in the same situation?

Next morning at dawn Shurigin put some food together, without letting his wife see what he was doing. The day before he had borrowed a tarpaulin boat from an old friend of his. It weighed only some 30 lbs., but was strong enough to carry two men and a load of three to four hundred-weight. Its structure was very simple: a wooden frame covered with well-oiled and painted tarpaulin.

Making two trips, Shurigin stacked the boat with traps, which had lain stored in the attic, a knapsack and a gun; and, without saying a word, he set out on a hunt.

A wonderful sense of quiet, known of old but not experienced for many a long day, descended upon Shurigin when his boat entered the reed thicket and touching the line of buoys with its tarpaulin sides, moved down the narrow, meandering passage between the high, swaying, ringing walls of reed.

He kept moving for quite a time, passing from one water-bed into another, leaving the inhabited places further and further behind him. In one of the narrow, meandering waterbeds Shurigin heard a splash in front of him, as if someone had struck the water with the flat of an oar. A second splash was heard, and a third. It was the musk-rats, frightened by his approach. On the shore, at the very edge of the water, he perceived a spot littered with gnawed reeds and

pieces of plant roots. It was the musk-rats' feeding-place.

Shurigin did not want to lay a trap there and went further, inspecting his domain. Musk-rats abounded, this year. Hunting had been slack during the war, and the animals had bred freely. Shurigin had not yet actually seen a single musk-rat. The animals hid at his approach, but their traces were everywhere. He noticed their small "huts" on the buoys, their feeding places, their privies. The musk-rat is a clean animal and only uses appointed places for easing nature.

Gliding smoothly, Shurigin's boat entered a spacious water-bed, where small buoys swayed here and there. He stopped rowing.

Just ahead of the boat he saw two animals warming themselves on a buoy in the sun, near their "hut" of reeds, shaking and cleaning themselves. Their reddish-brown fur glistened in the sun. The unfamiliar noise caught their attention. One musk-rat turned its head, the other stood on its hind-legs, looking watchfully in Shurigin's direction. Shurigin sat stock still in the boat. The animals quietened down. The bigger one, probably the male, muzzled and licked its mate upon which she started busily preening herself. The male looked once more around him and plunged gently under the water. A line of fine bubbles traced his path beneath. A moment later he reappeared holding a cake of mud in his mouth. He climbed the buoy and plastered the mud on the wall of the hut. Then he plunged again under the water and came back again with another cake of mud. The second musk-rat followed the example of the first. After having brought enough mud, they began gathering reeds and leaves.

Shurigin sat watching them without moving for twenty minutes at least.

The delight in observing nature

typical of every hunter made Shurigin forget all practical considerations at such moments.

Something frightened the muskrats, however. With a loud splash, intended to warn his mate, one musquash dived, and the other followed suit. Rings spread over the water and vanished, but the muskrats did not reappear. Shurigin stretched his stiffened limbs, pulled his boat near the buoy where the animals were building their hut and set his first trap.

When all his traps were in place, Shurigin made his way through the young reed shoots, found a suitable spot, made a fire, spread a blanket over the verdure and, while his food was cooking, lay on the blanket and looked into the high, clear sky of Kazakhstan. His confused soul too seemed to stretch its limbs and relax. Before sunset he was again in the boat.

The shadow of the reed stalks lay obliquely on the water. Darkness was gathering in the narrow canals. The sinking sun shone on the bristling heads of reed blossoms, making them glow like the coals of a distant camp-fire. Water beetles nimbly glided over the darkening surface of the water.

Taking his time about it, Shurigin made a round of all the traps he had set. He found muskrats only in five of them, but he was not disappointed. He knew that mostly the animals get trapped at night.

He set the traps anew, returned to his camp, skinned the animals he had caught, removed the fat and stretched the furs on wires to dry. He enjoyed the sight of his first post-war catch.

After sunset he went on a second round and finished it at eleven. The hunt was at its best.

He made his last round before dawn. Back again in his camp he lit a lantern made from a bottle, skinned the animals and went to sleep. He felt agreeably excited, as

one feels after a day well spent. Dawn came. In the east the sky brightened above the wall of reeds. It was cold. Shurigin wrapped himself in a fur robe and smoked, looking long into the night sky, already starless.

Shurigin awakened late. The sun was overhead. The skins of yesterday's catch were dry. He took them off the wires and put them into a bag. The day before he had shot two pheasants and a young boar. He cooked his lunch of pheasants, and dressed and salted the boar to take home.

Again Shurigin set traps during the day and went on his first round before sunset.

For five days Shurigin hunted in the same district and moved to another on the sixth. He had very good hunting everywhere. He felt the old freedom stealing back into his heart. At last he was able to rejoice again and be happy.

On the seventh night, as he came back from the last round, he made a false move rowing the boat, and it stuck in a narrow canal. Groping in the dark, Shurigin realized that dry stalks were hard up against the tarpaulin sides of the boat. He stood up, and levering the oar against the bank, shoved with all his weight. He succeeded in moving the boat slightly, but it was no good. The boat was now still more firmly stuck, held by its nose on a broken bush of reeds just beneath the surface.

Darkness made it difficult to see the exact position. Shurigin struggled for half an hour, but the boat remained jammed. Its wooden frame creaked, the reeds snapped, but Shurigin's endeavours remained vain.

He rested for a little while, then he stood up again and put all his weight on the oar, again without success. Each time the oar sank into the clay of the bank, and it was difficult to get it out. Shurigin felt

very tired. Sweat was pouring down his face and neck. Still he did not give up hope of freeing the boat. After short rests he tried time and time again. "If only I were a little stronger!" he thought. But he was not very strong, and it was hard to keep his footing on one leg in a swaying boat. Besides he was afraid of piercing a hole in the tarpaulin keel of the boat with his crutch.

It was dawn before he succeeded at last in getting his craft afloat. The boat reeled, he lost his balance and fell clumsily against the side.

He did not feel any pain, stood up, brought the boat out of the narrow canal and directed it towards his camp. He had already covered the best part of the way, when he became aware of a strange warmth under his shirt. He laid down the oar and put his hand under his shirt. His skin was damp. "Could it be sweat?" he wondered and took out his hand. It was smeared with blood.

Of course it was to be expected. Because of the strain in freeing the boat and because of the fall, the wound in his shoulder had opened again.

What now?

He took off his shirt. The wound was hurting badly now, as always when the wounded sets eyes on his own blood. He was unable to move his arm now. He was in despair. Was he to give up the hunt? And how was he to get home? He did not even have a bandage with him. Everything had gone so smoothly till now!

Shurigin sat in the boat crumpling his shirt in his right hand. Blood oozed out of the wound, tickling his side, but he did not wipe it off. Must he give up hunting? And then what? He no longer thought about getting home. He did not worry about his earnings, his big catch, enough to provide for his family for six months. He did not

even worry about his traps, which would be lost, if he were unable to collect them.

The consciousness of actually being unfit for hunting was the bitterest of all. He badly wanted to prove to others and to himself that his wound had not altered him, that he would be exactly his old self of before the war. Why, that boy in the train had been right! How could one avoid being like him! How could one not despair!

Yet he could not stay there and abandon himself to despair for ever. Something had to be done. Jacob tore his shirt into strips, bandaged his wound somehow. Then he unwound the rope, secured one end of it to the oar, made a halter at the other end and put it around his throat. Working with one hand and pulling the rope with his neck, he set the boat in motion. But the craft obeyed ill, and he had to pull long and hard to cover the short distance to his camp, which in normal circumstances he could have reached in half an hour. After a while he adapted himself to this new way of rowing, and the boat moved faster.

This night the traps were left unwatched. Without making a fire and without supper Shurigin laid himself down and slept heavily for some hours. In the morning he unwound the bandage. The wound was painful and bled. Common sense dictated his return home.

Shurigin compelled himself to stand up and get into the boat. He had not yet come to a decision. All he knew was that he had to stand up and get into the boat.

Then Shurigin thought of collecting the traps. There was an animal in every trap.

Common sense dictated his return home, but in spite of it he did not pick up the traps, but set them anew. Come what may, he would go on hunting as long as he was able to row the boat.

Above the reeds and above the

narrow canals lit by the purple sunset swarms of midgets were dancing in the air, filling it with their thin music. Ducks flew up over the lake with shrill cries.

Shurigin was sitting near the fire. A high column of white smoke rose to the sky. He was about to clean a pike which he had just caught, when a splashing came from afar and he heard his wife's voice calling him from somewhere among the reeds. A shot was fired, then another, then a third. "They are looking for me" Shurigin realized. He put the half-cleaned pike into the pot and descended the board-path to the shore.

The boat with his wife and his comrades was just coming out of the canal into clear water.

The head of the office started scolding him before he set foot on the shore. But Jacob paid no attention to him. He embraced his wife with his healthy arm and led her to the fire.

"Are you a boy of ten?" shouted the district manager, getting out of the boat. He followed on their heels, treading heavily. "You have roused

the entire district. Everyone is out, looking for the missing demobbed soldier."

The manager could hardly force his bulk along the narrow path. Dry stalks scrambled against his old hunting coat and snapped off short.

"Don't make such a row, Stepan Antonich," said Shurigin, "you will frighten the musk-rats."

Shurigin wanted to fetch a glowing coal from the fire to light his cigarette. He pulled himself towards the fire and realized that the pain in his shoulder was gone. The wound was closing. The boy in the train came into his mind again. "Where are you, my golden hills!" —the boy's voice was still in his ears. Shurigin smiled. "No, I shan't be like him," he thought. His wife was preparing the pike. The head of the office and the district manager brought reed-straw to the fire. They all wanted supper before starting for home, and there was no time to waste. The sun was already setting in a purple haze behind the reeds. Boats made their way to the watering places, betrayed by the crackling of stalks in the thickets.

(Translated from the Russian by M. Rhode and D. Trevor)

A Friend In Need to Katherine Mansfield

JOHN MIDDLETON MURRY

One of the happier encounters in Katherine Mansfield's life occurred in December 1915. She was then staying for the first time in the south of France at the Hotel Beau Rivage, Bandol. After helping her to settle in, I had returned to England. On the night before I left, we noticed at dinner an attractive, thoroughly well-washed man of about sixty with a white moustache, who had Englishman written all

over him. The next evening (as Katherine's letters record) he proved his nationality and his courtesy by "making her a leg" and offering her two copies of the *Times*."

Shortly afterwards, Katherine fell ill, not seriously, but with the fibrositis which sometimes incapacitated her, and with what she called her "Marseilles fever." She had to keep to her room.

On December 14, she wrote to me:

After mid-day that Englishman, terribly shy, knocked at my door. It appears he has a most marvellous cure for just my kind of rheumatism. Would I try it? All this was explained in the most preposterous rigmarole, in an attempt to appear offhand and at his poor unfortunate ease. I never saw a man so shy. Finally he says that if the *pharmacien* can't make it up here he will take the first train to Toulon and get it for me. It is a rubbing mixture which he got off a German doctor one year when he was in Switzerland for the winter sports. It sounds to me very hopeful—but I'd catch any straw.

So I thanked him, and humming and hawing he went off. I can't think what frightened him so. I shall have to put on a hat and a pair of gloves when he brings me the unguent.

Later the same day she wrote:

My Englishman has arrived with his pot of ointment and refuses to take even a pin or a bead in payment. How kind he is! It's easy to see he hasn't lived with me three years.

Two days later, the ointment was working. Katherine was still in bed, but

I think my Englishman's stuff is going to do me a great deal of good, and he has made me so perfectly hopeful—and has been in many ways such a comfort to me. Should this stuff not quite cure me, he has given me the address of a place in Normandy where one goes for a cure once a year . . . he says it's simply miraculous. . . . "You'll be skipping like a two-year old after a week there," says my nice funny man. This man isn't really a doctor. He's the Head of Guy's Dental Hospital—but he is a queer, delightful, good-natured person, and he has certainly been a comfort to me. . . . I have the bed covered with copies of *The Times*, marked at certain places with large blue crosses and a copy of *Le Temps* with arrows in the margin and "this will interest you" written underneath. All from the same kind and only donor.

Another two days and "my rheumatism this morning n'existe pas."

I've not been so free for a year. I can positively jump. I'm to go on using the unguent and my Englishman is going to give me the prescription today, for he leaves here on Monday (the next day). He is also going to conduct me to the post and see I'm not cheated over my

mandat from Kay, so that is all to the good.

But "my Englishman" did not leave on Monday. On the Wednesday, December 23, she wrote:

I am going to drive in a kerridge to that little Dürer town I told you of. (That was the little town in Katherine's poem, "The Town between the Hills.") The Englishman did not go away on Monday. He stayed till the end of the week to show me the different walks he has discovered here, and it is he who is taking me there this afternoon. How we get there, Heaven only knows, but he says there is a road. This man has certainly been awfully kind to me. You he can't understand at all; and for all I say I am afraid you will remain a villain. I can't persuade him that I am more than six years old and quite able to take my own ticket and manage my own affairs.

"But why should you?" says he. "What did he marry you for if it wasn't to look after you?" He is 62, and old-fashioned at that. But I feel in a very false position sometimes, and I can't escape from it. However, it's no matter.

On Christmas Day she wrote:

Now I am going for a walk with the Englishman who leaves definitely the day after tomorrow.

Later. It was a long walk through the woods and then we left the paths and he taught me how to climb as taught by the guides in Norway. It was boring beyond words but absolutely successful—we scaled dreadful precipices and got wonderful views. Then I had to learn how to descend, and how to balance if the stones roll when you put your foot on them. What a pa-man! All this he takes really seriously—and I find myself doing so too and I don't get one bit tired. I wish you could see my room. Even the blue glass vases we put away have had to come out for the big bouquets of yellow and pink roses. Tonight I have promised to dine with this pa-man. I don't doubt I shall get a lecture on touring in Spain. I already know more about how to travel in Italy than any living being, I should think.

Then "my Englishman" disappears for ever from Katherine's letters. He was indeed a true "Pa-man," to use the Beauchamp family phrase so often on Katherine's lips. It meant an oldish man who was "a character," set in ways which were a trifle eccentric, but charming; old-fashioned, cour-

teous, and above all reliable. Not many Englishmen received this distinction from Katherine.

Among her papers I lately found the famous prescription. It was signed, in a firm handwriting, "F. Newland-Pedley, F.R.C.S." So he was a doctor after all—obviously, from his qualification, a distinguished dental surgeon. I thought that I would like, if it were possible, to learn more about this Englishman who had befriended Katherine and been so great a comfort to her. Accordingly, I wrote to the Secretary of Guy's Hospital to ask for information. I was richly rewarded. I received a copy of *Guy's Hospital Gazette* for May 24, 1947, containing an article by Mr. B. Lees Read, the Clerk to the Governors, on the man himself. The substance of that article, by kind permission, follows here. It gives a fascinating picture of the closing years of a lovable, distinguished and eccentric Englishman who fully deserves a little niche in the temple of Fame, in his own right as a "character," as well as for his kindness to Katherine Mansfield.

§

There must be many old Guy's men who remember the late Mr. Newland-Pedley who, together with the late Sir Cooper Perry, founded the Dental School at Guy's Hospital in 1889.

From the founding of the School to the present day is a long step, and the School must have been very dear to Mr. Newland-Pedley, as, when he died at Acquaseria, near Como, Italy, on the 4th May, 1944, he bequeathed to the Governors of Guy's Hospital the residue of his estate, approximately £60,000. Under the terms of the bequest, the Governors are to hold the whole of the residuary estate in trust to commemorate his connection with the Dental School, and the income of the estate is to be applied to the endowment of existing prizes and scholarships, or to the establishment of others in connection with the Dental School.

Details of the bequest were communicated to the Hospital, and it appeared that the first charge on the estate was the provision of annuities, amounting to £900 per annum, to five Italians. Owing

to a mistake in law, the executor named in the will could not act and renounced probate, and the Court of Governors of Guy's Hospital nominated me to deal with the estate on behalf of the Hospital and School.

As Mr. Newland-Pedley was domiciled and died in enemy territory during the war, his property was subject to the rules governing the properties of enemies and aliens, and was controlled by the Custodian of Enemy Property. One of the first actions necessary was to make sure that the Italians entitled to annuities were, in fact, alive, and to endeavour also to find out if, in addition to the English estate, there was any property in Italy.

I therefore made arrangements to go to Como, and, in the course of carrying out the necessary work, was given a great deal of information about the last years of the life of this distinguished Guy's man.

He arrived in the village of Acquaseria a sick man, aged 73, in the year 1930, and asked for accommodation at a small hotel. Immediately he had to go to bed and was nursed through a serious illness by the owners of the hotel. He made, however, a very good recovery and, after some time, stated that he had not enjoyed such good health for years and intended to make this place his home for the rest of his life. Subsequently, he persuaded the owners of the hotel to sell this and to purchase a villa where he was the sole guest and, in return, promised to provide for their future which, in fact, he did by the annuities granted in his will.

He became in every sense of the word the patron of the village of Acquaseria, and I heard many stories of his interest in the people and the good that he did.

One exceptional act was to build a church. It was built not out of any religious inclination, but because of the poverty that had descended on the village by reason of the application of sanctions against Italy during the Abyssinian War. This had closed the only industry in the village and reduced the population to starvation level. There was no unemployment pay or public assistance comparable with that in force in England and Mr. Newland-Pedley was very concerned about the well-being of these people who had become his friends.

He had, however, the common aversion of the English to paying out money without seeing some return and, as he was anxious to help the village through its difficulties, he suggested to the parish priest that he should pay so much per week to every able-bodied man on condition that he did a full week's work in quarrying and hauling stone and in the erection of the village church, which at this date and for many years previously

had really existed in name only, consisting of the foundations, and a crypt in which were held religious services. Needless to say, the parish priest received the suggestion with enthusiasm and as Mr. Newland-Pedley left him to see what work he got in exchange for the sums disbursed, I was assured that the villagers had to put in both a full and a hard week's work for their money.

The result was a very picturesque stone church, erected in the village at a cost of approximately £1,500, and a large marble plaque on one of its walls commemorates the late Mr. Newland-Pedley's generosity.

Many other instances were reported to me of his desire to help the population of the village but at the same time to do it his own way.

On one occasion he purchased the entire stock of the village sweet-shop, had this made up into small packets and distributed them amongst the children attending the school. The religious sisters, who were the teachers in the School, went to see Mr. Newland-Pedley, and remonstrated gently with him that there were many things that were necessary and which would benefit the children infinitely more than sweets: for example, new blackboards in the school; and they suggested to him that if he was contemplating making further gifts they should have an opportunity of suggesting the form these should take. I understand that Mr. Newland-Pedley was later heard to remark that he knew far better than any teachers what was good for children and what they liked.

On another occasion, during a severe winter, he purchased pink woollen jerseys and skirts for all the girls under seven attending the school, and navy blue jerseys and shirts for all the boys, and strong boots for both; and, although he always emphatically refused to entertain suggestions put forward by different people connected with the village, it was noticed that, nevertheless, these suggestions sometimes bore fruit at a later date.

There is no question, however, that the least pressure upon Mr. Newland-Pedley would inevitably bring an unexpected reaction. and this soon came to be appreciated. I incline to believe that some suggestions were made in the hope that, in seeking the opposite, Mr. Newland-Pedley would, in fact, do what was desired. But this could hardly have been the case when, on being asked to help in the provision of certain facilities for the education of elder children, he retorted with the purchase of a hoop and stick for every child in the school!

Almost up to the time of his death he retained his independence and mental alertness, as well as a determination to

carry out anything to which he set his hand. A story was told of how, on one occasion, when with some friends in the village he had been to see someone who was ill, he was confronted with a jump of about three to four feet down into a sunken road. As he was then about eighty-six, one of the party went to lend assistance. This was abruptly refused, with the comment that he would make the jump himself even if it killed him!

One thing he always refused to do, and, during the whole of his connection with the village, adhered to his decision, namely, in no way would he attempt to carry on his profession.

His name is almost a legend in the small mountain village for his many acts of generosity and forethought. Although it is, in a sense, an isolated area and, particularly during the time of the Abyssinian War and in the first three or four years of this last war, there were many bad characters either living in or roaming the neighbourhood, it is said that, although English, he could have walked alone and would never have been harmed anywhere in the district for miles around.

The payment of five substantial annuities to Italians may, at first sight, appear rather strange, but three of these were undoubtedly earned by the three elderly people who for nearly fourteen years devoted themselves to his care. With regard to the other two, these, again, indicate Mr. Newland-Pedley's concern for young people. Under Italian law, I believe it was the position that an afflicted relative had to be maintained by the family; and a sister of his housekeeper had two children, both girls, one of whom has only a childish mentality and is deaf and dumb. Mr. Newland-Pedley was concerned at the thought that in due time responsibility for this child would fall on her sister, the only other member of the family, hence one of these annuities was given with the object of reducing that burden. The second of the annuities given for reasons other than service was to another piece of his housekeeper, and was given to provide for her future purely because of the affection which Mr. Newland-Pedley had developed for this child during the twelve years, he had watched her growth.

I am exceedingly sorry that the war between Italy and this country appears likely to have the effect of depriving these people of much, if not all, of the benefit which Mr. Newland-Pedley wished to confer. Even when I had to break the news to them that the annuities are at present payable to the Custodian of Enemy Property in this country, and that they would have to take their chance of re-

covering them from the Italian Government, their only comment was "I suppose this is another present from Mussolini."

Mr. Newland-Pedley would never agree with the idea that Italy might be at war with this country and steadily refused to make any financial arrangement which would have helped him in that event. The result was that after the outbreak of war he had only the very small allowance permitted by the Italian Government, and he had to be maintained very largely by the people he had befriended and who also had to meet the expenses of his funeral. On more than one occasion during the last years of his life he said "I am very tired of being poor," and for some time after the outbreak of war he could not be persuaded that it was impossible for him to obtain money from England so that he could carry on as usual.

Never at any time during the war was Mr. Newland-Pedley interfered with by either the Italians or the Germans; no restrictions were imposed, and he was left free to live as he had done in the past. Before his death, however, he expressed a wish to be buried in a particular place, but, when enquiries were made with this end in view, the German Commandant for the area refused permission for the removal of the body, as the proposed place of burial was in one commune and the place of death in another; he had, therefore, to be buried in the cemetery nearest the villa in which he had lived.

Guy's men have been responsible for many things from time to time, but it must surely be unique for one to found a school in his own country and to build a church in the country of his adoption.

Two Poems

MARGARET GREIG

THAT WHICH IS PERFECT

Some have dispensed with Eden,

But I was less assured;

I sought forbidden country

And felt the flaming sword.

I hungered after knowledge

And tried the bitter fruit,

And Michael and the angels

Were ruthless in pursuit.

Some are content with Athens,

With London, or with Rome,

But I remembered somewhere

There was an older home.

And though I never entered

Which ever way I went,

I had a dream of Eden,

And cannot be content.

SEQUENCE

When light has died and left a lucid ghost

To glimmer on the edges of the sky,

It is the moment that impels me most

To feel it is a simple thing to die.

No sudden change along the destined way,

But, imperceptible as this,

A moment out of time, and life, like day,

Dissolves into its own antithesis.

Nursery Rhyme of Innocence and Experience

CHARLES CAUSLEY

I had a silver penny
And an apricot tree
And I said to the sailor
On the white quay

"Sailor O sailor
Will you bring me
If I give you my penny
And my apricot tree

A fez from Algeria
An Arab drum to beat
A little gilt sword
And a parakeet?"

And he smiled and he kissed me
As strong as death
And I saw his red tongue
And I felt his sweet breath

*"You may keep your penny
And your apricot tree
But I'll bring your presents
Back from sea."*

O the ship dipped down
On the rim of the sky
And I waited while three
Long summers went by

Then one steel morning
On the white quay
I saw a grey ship
Come in from sea

Slowly she came
Across the bay
For her flashing rigging
Was shot away

All round her wake
The seabirds cried
And flew in and out
Of the hole in her side

Slowly she came
In the path of the sun
And I heard the sound
Of a distant gun

And a stranger came running
Up to me
From the deck of the ship
And he said, said he

"O are you the boy
Who would wait on the quay
With the silver penny
And the apricot tree?"

I've a plum-coloured fez
And a drum for thee
And a sword and a parakeet
From over the sea."

"Oh where is the sailor
With bold red hair?
And what is that volley
On the bright air?"

O where are the other
Girls and boys?
And why have you brought me
Children's toys?"

A Dream

from a theme by Sully Prudhomme

RAYMOND TONG

As I lay dreaming
A labourer said:
"Make your own bread!
I'm tired of your scheming.
I'm tired of ploughing
For others to reap.
No more will I keep
You idly loafing,
Awake on your bed.
Make your own bread!"

Then suddenly a weaver
Cried out as he rose:
"Make your own clothes!"

O foolish deceiver,
I'll clothe you no more.
Think you to pay me
With mere poetry?
For such things I'm too poor
As God only knows.
Make your own clothes!"

And then roared a mason
With voice very hoarse:
"Build your own house!
I'll teach you the lesson
It pays not to roam,
And scorn honest toil
With mortar or soil.
For you still need a home
For you and your spouse.
Build your own house!"

So alone and forsaken
By my fellow men,
I called unto heaven
And tried to awaken
The pity of God.
But instead of giving
A knowledge of living
By plough and shuttle and hod,
He snarled, a huge lion,
As I called unto heaven.

But then with a start
I opened my eyes
And watched the sun rise
With joy in my heart.
For the labourer ploughed,
The weaver wove,
And with the mason above
Sang praises aloud
To their God so wise,
As I watched the sun rise.

And since this day
My lesson I've learned:
None should be spurned
For the lowly way
He earns his bread.
For we must live
By mutual aid and love
Even before we're dead.
Even God's keep is earned.
None should be spurned.

Two Poems

BEN VINCENT

A V E V E R U M C O R P U S

You have shaken him by the hand
The boy at meeting,
And felt the hard silk of it,
The warmth, the small, artless art
Of the hand of the Word, and the milk of it.

So were you once, and,
Your heart beating,
You felt, as you grabbed—the cheek of it!—
The chill, the large, stale counterpart
Of the fist of the World, and the reek of it.

He'll shake you by the heart,
The Word within, the infleshment of it,
The hard-silk meeting (understand?)
The unpretentious, spontaneous greeting
Of the Son of Man; and ah, the refreshment of it!

P O E M 1 9 4 7

The words are mouthed, the deeds are done,
There's nothing left to do or say;
All the verbiage under the sun
Is scribbled and swotted and chucked away.

The Authorised Version is covered with dust,
The golden bowl and the pitcher are bust,
Sharks are about, there's no one to trust,
Bill Blake's sword is red with rust,
Golden lads and girls all must . . .

Penelope has turned a whore,
Philemon's slammed the bloody door,
The sky props crack and God's a lout,
The world's unwound and the sun's conked out.

But here comes General Love, foot-slogging,
Wearing his Cap of Liberty,
A scarlet tunic with golden frogging
And medals galore For Charity.

The sparrows wipe away their tears
And toss their caps and give three cheers;
The bald-head oaks forget their years
And dance gavottes like cavaliers;
The vampires pack their bags, poor dears.

The stars shall kiss, the moon shall sigh
And showers of comets plumb the sky,
The milky way shall spangle the street
And Catherine wheels shall carry our feet.

The Song of the Fool

JAMES KIRKUP

Come to me, all
you who are dull, or lame,
take refuge with the Fool,
and he will make you well again.

All you who shun
the long, golden
hours of the sun,
the blessings of the moon

and drifting stars,
come to my arms,
and I shall tell you prayers
for fears, and keep your fingers warm.

All you who toil
and count your money, all
you who nightly spoil
your love, and are dull

with shop-talk and stale airs,
remember me, among the cares
of pride, the plans of war,
in dreams of cash and motor-cars.

Throw off your dismal dress
of fashion, lady, and confess
your self to me in simple nakedness.
Wash off the greasy gloss

that masks your empty face,
and let me fill its place
with a refined and ruder grace:
unbind your hair, your feet unlace,

and walk with me in tune
to fiddles and sweet-acid flutes
through grove and forest, street and town;
and take a lover for the lonely nights.

Come, you who cannot eat,
and I can give you appetite:
to the hungry, food to fill their bellies—
bread, nuts, cheeses, milk, wine and berries.

Children, you who are all
the friend and brother of the Fool,
do not disown his smile so soon,
or ever; be his constant soul

to-day and always, you with toys
and tricks—do not go forgetting
his gaiety and gentleness. Let all boys
and girls laugh at their suns and spelling.

O, come to me, all
you who are dull, or lame,
take refuge with the Fool,
and he will make you well again.

Evening Ritual

CHARLES EDWARD EATON

The muscled boys wait on the hill,
Sun-bronzed and boisterous in their mood;
With youth bright-braided in the will,
They scoff at idle solitude.

They wait for girls to wander by,
Soft figures out of evening's ease,
With arms as languorous as the sky
And hips that sway like limber trees.

The lean and ruddy-natured boys
Enjoy their passing, one by one,
Grave and gradual in their poise
Like the slow setting of the sun.

As luminous round the hill they wind
And down the goat path to the plains,
Their grace compels the rugged mind
And leaves a silence in the veins.

Tim'rous Beastie

F. GRICE

One morning, for the first time in his working life, Capper Nicholson appeared at the pithead, not with the old-fashioned white bait-poke in which he usually carried his mid-shift meal, but with a big toffee tin.

"Now what's thoo been gettin' thisel', Capper?" asked Dickie Robinson, the deputy, as all the back shift men were sitting on their unkers, waiting for the cage. "Is tha gannin' to start to live on taffee now?"

"Nay," replied Capper, "I've been gettin' misel' a bait-tin off the wife with the shop next door to us."

"And what's the matter wi' thi auld bait-poke? Hes thi missus nae mair auld shirts to rive up?"

"Nay, there's nowt else but auld shirts in our house. Nor, man, dis tha knaa, we're eaten out wi' mice down where I'm workin' and the little beggars gán through a bait-poke like nowt. I've had to get misel' a bait-tin or I waddent hev a bite left."

"Ay?"

"Yis. One o' these days, I'll get misel' summat to poison all the little beggars off."

"Thoo'll be fetchin' your auld tom cat down next, Capper," added Lanky Liddle, rising as he heard the cage humming up the shaft. "Haway, and keep tight hand on thi portmanteau."

Capper was quite unruffled by the conversation. He packed into the cage with the others, and almost before the sound of the rapper rapping them away had died, the cage began to fall.

The shift was about four hours gone when Dickie Robinson called in on his rounds to look in on Lanky Liddle. Lank was working his place, a little recess about four feet

high and four feet wide, stripped to the waist and sitting on a solid little cracket or stool. His shoulders, dirty as they were with four hours' work, showed up with a dull whiteness against the background of black and reddened coal. Resting his right arm on his right thigh, he swung his pick with strong diagonal strokes, and then levered out the coal, lump by lump. Dickie eased himself past the tub that almost filled the gallery, and sat down familiarly on his unkers just behind Lank.

"How's she gannin', Lank?" he asked.

"Not sae bad, Dick," replied Lank, taking a pull at his bottle. "I've seen hairder coal."

"Tha wants to keep thisel' weel timbered up, Lank. Extra weel. Ye canna trust the rammel much down here."

"Dis tha think sae, Dick?"

"I'm sure on't. The top's none ower safe."

"Why, thoo'd better send us a bit mair timber in, will tha, when tha gans out."

"That I will, lad, and I'm glad thoo's being sensible about it. I wish Capper wad tak as much notice: I've just been in tiv him, and looks tha, he's as careless as a monkey. All I can get out of him is, 'O I'm all reet. I've been lang enough in this flat to knaa when I'm safe and when I'm not.' But I tellt him."

But he did not finish his sentence. Before he got to the end his words were drowned by a noise above them and to their left. It began with a cracking and a tearing, and became a dull roar. The roar could be heard far above them, reaching farther and farther up, as earth and stone slid down to take the place of what had slipped below it.

"Get out quick, Lank!" said Dick. "That's Capper, as sure as I'm here."

Lank seized his lamp, and the two of them hurried as best they could out into the main waggon way; then they turned to make their way into the working place that was next to Lanky's, but they were met with a cloud of dust rolling outward, and behind the dust a heap of stone and small stuff completely blocking the way.

"It's Capper arl reet," said Dickie. "Knock for him."

Lanky picked up a stone and knocked on the solid coal wall, once, twice, three times, and then waited. There was no answer. He tried again, but there was still no answer. "He's a gonner, Lank, I doubt," said Dick. "But we'll hev to get stuck into this. Get a start on it, and I'll get the rest o' the men in the flat, and 'phone up the boss. I'll be back before tha' knaas where tha' is. But for God's sake, mind thisel. She might come down again."

Lank did not need urging. Before the deputy had finished speaking he had set to work clearing what might turn out to be a dozen tons, or a hundred tons of rubbish between him and his trapped mate.

He might have worked with a better heart if he had known that Capper was safe and alive; for so he was at the moment. The roof had fallen behind him, burying his tub, shovel and clothes, leaving him shut up in a space smaller than a bathroom. After the fall he had tried in a panic to hack his way through the wall with his pick; but when the dust settled he saw that what had imprisoned him was a running fall. The more he scraped away, the more it poured down the big crack like sand, threatening to run in and fill even the small cabin space that was left. And now he was sitting, thanking God that his lamp was still burning, and that his bait-

tin was not buried, and listening for the hopeful knocking from the other side. Sometimes he thought he could hear it, and knocked eagerly in reply, but he couldn't hear the answer. Then when he had stopped knocking, a silence mounted and mounted as if it were no silence but a gathering noise, and pounded up and pressed on his head with increasing weight. Utter isolation—this was something he had never before known. Even the little noises he made as he moved seemed only to emphasise the depth and the thickness of the silence around him. By and by, too, he began to feel the cold in his feet and across the small of his back. He tried to swing his arms, but space was small, and the sound of himself moving was beginning to unnerve him, so commanding was the hush around him. At last he crouched as close as he could in one corner, doubled up his knees, put his still-burning lamp between his legs, wrapped his arms around his body, and waited—for death, rescue or madness.

He remained like this for what seemed to him to be hours, when he was roused by a little noise. Was it a new cracking in the roof? Was it only a piece of coal falling away from the face? Or was it a signal from a rescue party? Whatever it was, he seized on it eagerly; it was something happening outside himself, some part of the inanimate mass around him stirring. He moved his lamp so that it shone a stronger light on the corner where he thought the noise had come from, and looked intently. For a long time there was no sound, but at last there was a little scratching, and he saw, pushing its head around a stone—a mouse.

"Well, I'll be damned," whispered Capper. "Well, I'll be damned. So thoo's caught an' all."

The whisper was enough. The mouse whisked away, and the

silence came back; but it did not weigh upon the trapped miner as before. Although it was only one of the little beggars that he had wanted to poison five hours before, it was company, and company was precious. Taking a bit of cold bacon from his bait-tin, he set it about three feet away from the stone and waited.

By and by, the mouse reappeared. It pushed its head around the stone again, and then withdrew. It reappeared about a minute later, and this time ran about two or three steps to the right, paused, sat back on its hind legs as if listening, then scampered back. Another minute, and it was venturing out again, this time to the left; and then came the same pause to listen, and the same scamper back. In spite of the cold, Capper kept as still as a stone, and watched the manœuvres with fascination.

"I wonder if thoo knaas that we're both fastened in, little un," he thought to himself. "But if thoo dis or thoo dissent, thoo's showin' a better spirit than me."

Again the mouse came out, this time with greater assurance, venturing a foot away from the stone. Then came the pause, the moment's reconnoitre, then the quick safe run home. Then it ventured out in another direction, then tried this way and that way; but every exploration ended with the quick run home. It was like being present at a drama, watching this little animal exploring systematically all the ground that it could cover, working its way methodically to the piece of bacon, all the while guarding itself so carefully, and ensuring so skillfully that at the slightest sign of danger, it could retreat to safety with the minimum of delay and effort, practising over and over the run home till retreat was automatic and perfect.

"By reets, I ought to kill thoo, ye little beggar," thought Capper

to himself. "I daresay, thoo's pinched my bait many a time before now. But if I dinna show thoo ony mercy, I dinna see how I can expect ony misel. Besides, thoo's teacht me a lesson. If I'd stock as much care as thoo did, I waddent ha been here now. Haway, little un, and we'll share the bait."

And so, when the mouse had secured the first piece of bacon, he put down another bit for it. He scared it away, but, a few minutes later, it came back again, and went through the whole intriguing pantomime, again and again.

It was seventeen hours later when the rescue party got through to Capper. They had had to tunnel in a wide detour to avoid the running fall. When they found him, he was unconscious, but not in bad fettle, and the warm blankets, hot water-bottles and brandy soon brought him round. He was weak, but was alert enough to keep asking if he was at bank—that is, out of the pit, yet. When they told him no, he closed his eyes and said, "Mind, dinna try to tak my stockings off yit, and be sure to tell as when we get to bank."

So when they carried the stretcher out of the cage at the top of the shaft, they told him where they were. Then he threw back the blankets, put his hand down his stocking and took out a little brown mouse. It too was still alive, and it wriggled in his hand.

"There thoo is, little un," he said. "Thoo kept me from gannen daft arl the time I was in there. I swore if ivver I got out, I wad let thoo out an' all. Off tha gans, and good luck to tha!"

He opened his hand and the mouse scampered off under a pile of timber.

"Mind that tom cat in the joiner's shop!" shouted Capper after it. "And if thoo hes onny sense at all, nivver gan down there again."

MONTGOMERY BELGION

Among French political leaders of the last fifty years Joseph Caillaux (1863-1944) and Pierre Etienne Flandin (b. 1889) have had careers—Flandin's being happily still uncompleted—that offer a special biographical fascination. They are two men for whom the Tarpeian rock was indeed near the Capitol. Each was head of one or more of the one hundred and seven administrations of the Third Republic; each served in other cabinets as well; and each was put in prison. If they escaped execution, the threat of it did for a while hang over each in turn. Yet for neither of them was apparent ruin the end. A court acquitted Flandin, and presently he, as Caillaux before him, began to reascend. The paths of glory reopened, and each was able as of old the applause of listening senates to command.

Accordingly, if we turn back to view the detail of their fateful moments and accompany them in sympathetic imagination through their successes and vicissitudes, we are likely to experience that high emotion which quickens men in the presence of the intense personal drama of others. That would be reason enough for me to dwell now for a short space on the attitude of each. But there is another reason, and it is the one which actuates me.

For Caillaux as for Flandin the hour of humiliation and obloquy arrived in the midst of war. One may be said to have mounted a bucking hobby-horse, the other kept what in the sequel became bad company; and for both this happened at a time of patriotic excitement, when the fever of national passion and prejudice was in paroxysm. Except by a faithful few, each was despised and for-

saken. Ostensibly each was altogether in the wrong. And yet, as I have said, in a few years the scandal of the alleged heterodoxy was as if it had never been, and to each leadership was entrusted anew. That is surely curious; something that invites investigation. Furthermore, there is the unblinkable fact that the men who, thanks to popular sentiment, were enabled to work their will with the destinies of France, first while Caillaux was put behind bars, and again when Flandin was imprisoned, pursued policies of which the consequences to-day hardly appear as undilutedly satisfactory. The fact does not of course mean that anybody who differed from the men in question regarding what should have been done was wiser than they were. But at least it is a fact which should dispose us to listen now that Caillaux, and Flandin also, have put forward a defence of their conduct and convictions. We may not discover how, thanks to some other course of action, Western Europe might now be enjoying peace and plenty. We may, however, obtain some slight guidance regarding the expectations which it will be safe for us to form in the future.

§

The period during which Caillaux was at the head of French affairs came only a few years before the outbreak of the first Great War. The international tension was already rising. As French prime minister in 1911, he was confronted with the war clouds that darkened the diplomatic sky when the German gunboat "Panther" was sent to the Moroccan port of Agadir. On that occasion the trial of strength was adjourned, and in the interval before it actually began, Caillaux,

and also his wife, were subjected to a grievous personal ordeal. At the end of 1913 they became the targets of systematic vilification in a leading Paris newspaper. Day after day for three months the editor of that paper wrote an article filled with shameful allegation and innuendo, till at last, goaded to desperation, Mme. Caillaux went to the blackmailer's office and shot him dead. She was arrested and committed to the assizes.

This had to be recalled, although it is not her trial but her husband's that I set out from. Caillaux's arrest occurred in 1917. His trial did not take place till twenty-seven months afterwards—in 1920. He was sentenced to be deprived of political rights for ten years. In April 1925 he was once again in office. He became minister of finance. Two charges had been brought against him. First, he was accused of dealings with the enemy. This charge the court declared to be without foundation. Secondly, he was accused of having talked to Germans; though without evil intent. This was the charge on account of which sentence was passed.

The fact that the sentence was quashed when it had run half its course renders it suspect. He himself denied ever having spoken to a German. All he would admit was that perhaps some of his expressions of opinion did reach German ears. At the worst the evidence against him was slender. In retrospect it may seem to have been too slender. Was there, then, some special reason that made certain persons deem it imperative that he should, during the second half of the first war, be under lock and key? His answer to the question is unhesitating. He was, he says, the victim of personal enemies. Clemenceau and Poincaré had their knife into him. When Clemenceau became prime minister, he and

Poincaré—the president of the Republic—put their heads together. They agreed on his political ruin.

This allegation Caillaux did not make public till the two men had preceded him into the grave. If the evidence against him was slender, is the evidence here any stronger? On the contrary, this time the evidence would seem to be inexistent. Of Caillaux it cannot be said, as Manning is alleged to have said of Newman, that he was a good hater. In his *Mémoires*,* the first volume of which came out when he was seventy-nine and the last posthumously, he is more than indulgent to Briand. Yet, if a recent historian from outside the schools, E. Beau de Loménie, is to be trusted,† Briand was the real villain of the Caillaux piece. In the campaign of calumny and blackmail of which Caillaux was the victim in 1914, Briand had a twofold share. Obviously Calmette, the editor of the *Figaro*, who wrote the daily article vilifying Caillaux, was a mere tool. Who was behind him? In the previous year Caillaux had renewed his demand for a French income tax and had advocated that budgets should be balanced out of taxation instead of by means of loans. According to Beau de Loménie, his pertinacity in this cause horrified powerful financial and industrial interests. They shuddered at the thought of the call that would be made on their pockets if his proposals were adopted. They plotted his removal from the political scene. Calmette did his dirty work at their instigation.

Where Briand came in was, first, in supplementing that work with two of his own speeches, and, secondly, in picking out Calmette,

* *Mes Mémoires*, 3 vols. Paris: Plon (1942-47).

† *Les Responsabilités des dynasties bourgeoises*, vol. 2 (Paris: Denoël, 1947), the section: "Le Duel Briand-Caillaux."

was his creature. The cause of Briand's rancour against Caillaux was that Caillaux engineered the downfall of his cabinet in 1910. Yet it is not on Briand, but on Clemenceau and Poincaré alohe, that Caillaux, in his *Mémoires*, pours his gall. It might seem as if he looked back on his own imprisonment as a source of more bitter grievance than the despicable attacks that brought his wife to the assizes. The explanation of his discriminating is that where he had forgiven, he forgot. By 1917 he and Briand were again on friendly terms, and in 1925 it was Briand who brought him back to office. But with Clemenceau and Poincaré there was no reconciliation.

Hence in the *Mémoires* Briand is at most gently reproached whereas upon Clemenceau and Poincaré are heaped contempt, disparagement, and accusation. The *Mémoires* would be worth reading for the sake of their dramatic, oratorical style alone. They contain first-rate descriptive reporting. In recalling notable conversations and interviews, Caillaux invariably professes to remember the actual words exchanged, and each time there are touches that make the scene so vivid as to lead the reader to feel as if he too had been present. I know of no writer since Victor Hugo in his *Choses vues* with so unerring a gift for cinematographic portraiture. But Caillaux's ability to substantiate allegations is nil.

He needs to show that if Clemenceau and Poincaré harried him and wanted to have him shot, it was from personal motives. Nothing is contributed to this end by repeating stories of their turpitude in other directions. To level at a dead Clemenceau the time-worn Continental accusation that he was at the orders of that ubiquitous bogey, the British Intelligence Service, is as pathetic as it is to

notorious Bolo, after he had been sentenced to death, was offered his life if he could incriminate Caillaux. A stickler for facts wherever his own conduct is in question, Caillaux rejects no hearsay or presumption if it will sound damaging to others.

Against Poincaré two really grave charges are brought in the third, posthumous, volume, but they too rest on hearsay. One Caillaux heard of from Briand. The last occasion on which he saw Briand was in 1932, and Briand then told him, he says, that on 29 or 30 July 1914—even the date is uncertain—Poincaré, president of the Republic, called a special meeting with three men. The men were: Viviani, French prime minister and foreign minister; Isvolsky, Russian ambassador; Francis Bertie, British ambassador. Poincaré explained that they were confronted with a momentous decision. The French had to reply to a communication from St. Petersburg. It was to the effect that there would be no Russian mobilization unless the Russian government were first assured of French armed support in the event mobilization led to war. This Russian demand, according to Caillaux, went far beyond anything called for by the terms of the Franco-Russian alliance. The alliance provided for France to intervene only in the event Russia were attacked by Germany (Germany, and not Austria). Caillaux says that Briand was positive that nevertheless the meeting agreed to have the Russian government given the assurance requested. It was then that Russia mobilized, and her mobilization preceded all the others. The clear implication is that the four men—Poincaré, Viviani, Isvolsky, and Bertie—cast the die which determined that Europe should be drenched in blood.

The other charge brought against Poincaré by Caillaux concerns a

meeting of the French cabinet on 1 August, 1914. At this meeting Viviani is said to have announced that there had just appeared a faint prospect of settlement. On hearing Viviani's news, Poincaré exclaimed that the excellent opportunity of fighting Germany must not be missed, and, turning to the minister of war, he added that "if necessary we shall create a frontier incident."

About these grave charges two things are to be noticed. In the first place, neither that alleging that the Russian government was encouraged from Paris to mobilize nor that alleging that Poincaré avowed an eagerness to give battle is put forward for the first time. Minus the circumstantial detail, I first met them in an Austrian propagandist booklet which came into my hands in 1915. They were repeated in France after the war was over. But they were never proved. There could only be point in making them again if proof had become available. Proof, however, is exactly what Caillaux fails to produce. Regarding the first charge, Briand was evidently not present at the Elysée meeting of the exact date of which he was uncertain. Regarding the second charge, Caillaux says that his informant was "M——". Only if "M——" stands for Malvy was the informant an actual witness of what is alleged. But we are not made sure that "M——" does mean Malvy. Rather perfidiously, we are invited to suppose that it does. The French Yellow Book covering the period mentions no such meeting as Briand is said to have described. It states that Austria was the first Power to mobilize—Austria, and not Russia. Aware of this, Caillaux of course declares that the Yellow Book was doctored. But there again he proves, and can prove, nothing.

In the second place, even if both charges happened to be true, their truth would do nothing to establish what Caillaux, as I have said, must

need to show; namely, that, when he was arrested in 1917, it was solely owing to Clemenceau's and Poincaré's hatred. The allegation that he was proceeded against from purely personal motives is one which he never so much as begins to substantiate. Moreover, a more plausible explanation of his treatment stares his reader in the face. Caillaux, in his posthumous volume, admits frankly that he favoured a negotiated peace. He says that in 1917 the Germans, although they had been repulsed from Verdun, would not have been likely to agree to end the war if that had involved relinquishing Alsace-Lorraine, and the restoration of Alsace-Lorraine was a *sine qua non* of any peace acceptable to the French. But Austria, so he contends, was in a more conciliatory mood. Again he relies on hearsay.

Briand told him in 1928, he says, that, apart from the notorious mission of Prince Sixtus of Bourbon, there was an inquiry from the Austrians regarding what terms they might expect if they broke away from their ally and passed to the French side. He declares that had he then been in office he would have jumped at such an opportunity. Even had he failed, his readiness to end the war as soon as possible would, he says, have enabled him to obtain from the French nation support to pursue that war more vigorously.

This is transparent rubbish. In 1917 Russia was out of the war. The submarine campaign was achieving the maximum results. In France itself there had been the April mutinies. It is obvious that at such a time neither of the Central Powers would have dreamed of concluding peace on any but victorious terms. The French government of the day did not wish to hear those terms for two reasons. In the first place, they would not have been worth listening to. In the second

place, even if it could be proved that knowledge of an Austrian disposition to seek terms would, as Caillaux contends, have spurred the French to renewed effort—and that is highly questionable—the gain would have been negligible in comparison with the encouragement which any French readiness to listen to terms would have given the enemy peoples. Thus Caillaux himself avows having had in 1917 views that can only be called mischievous, and that is quite enough to account for the way he was dealt with. To shut him up in both senses of the phrase was the sensible thing to do.

His trial in 1920, after the war was over and the peace treaty signed, is another matter. By then it would have been a graceful gesture to set him free. It is not surprising that, as he says, the *Manchester Guardian* called the trial "a farce." Yet, if he had to be tried, the delay was to his benefit. A court sitting while passions were aflame might have feared to be mild. The consideration is one which he all the more easily overlooks that, even in retrospect, he can never see his mistake. That the moment for talking of a negotiated peace was ill-chosen he does not understand.

His belief in the desirability of a negotiated peace sprang from the conviction that an understanding between France and Germany was not impossible in 1914. In 1911 he had successfully negotiated a settlement of the Agadir crisis, and yet his path was then strewn with pitfalls and obstructions. At first there was a French clamour. As in 1914, Frenchmen were not lacking to demand that the fat should be thrown in the fire. They wanted the German provocation—the despatch of the gunboat to Agadir—to be met by a French provocation—the despatch of several French warships into Moroccan waters. That, he

says, would have allowed the Germans to pose as the victims of aggression. Instead, the French warmongers were foiled, and the government displayed a combination of firmness and caution. According to Caillaux, this was fortunate; for in 1911 France could have rattled only a cardboard sword. The army was not ready for action; and Russia, still crippled by its recent struggle with Japan, refused to promise armed support.

In the end good sense prevailed, although it had had to contend not only with warmongering, but also with an incredible ramification of official and unofficial negotiators. Elsewhere in the *Mémoires* Caillaux mentions that during Clemenceau's first premiership (it was in 1908 at the age of sixty-five that Clemenceau became prime minister for the first time) Pichon, the foreign minister, was excluded from any dealings with Britain. Those Clemenceau insisted on reserving for himself. Pichon, on his side, negotiated with Germany behind his chief's back—surreptitiously, and, as it proved, fruitlessly. That was nothing to what went on after Agadir. Simultaneously with the official despatches to De Selves, the foreign minister, Jules Cambon, French ambassador in Berlin, sent reports and appeals to Caillaux. The German Emperor by-passed the German chancellor, the German foreign minister, and the German ambassador in Paris, utilizing one of the embassy staff to talk with French ministers and others in his behalf. Two permanent officials of the Quai d'Orsay, Herbette and Conti, were busy unknown to both De Selves and Caillaux. De Selves was running round to Clemenceau, Ribot, and Léon Bourgeois, with complaints that Caillaux was pursuing a policy opposed to his. Kiderlen-Wächter, German foreign secretary, acted independently of the chancellor, Bethmann-Hollweg.

He kept his mistress informed in writing of every move which he was pretending to keep secret. On top of all, leakages reached the French press, and from time to time a Paris newspaper would burst out with some glaring indiscretion. For instance, at one delicate stage, Jules Cambon complains (in a letter which Caillaux reproduces) that a French newspaper has proclaimed in a headline that "Germany gives way." Needless to say, nothing was more likely to ensure that Germany would not give way. In the face of such a complex of intrigue, it is surely remarkable that settlement was not defeated, and, still more, that the settlement was, as Caillaux makes clear, advantageous to the French.

It is from this success that Caillaux argues to the conclusion that in 1914 also agreement was not out of the question, and, what is more notable, that Germany could have been brought to end the war of 1914-18 with a negotiated peace. As we have seen, Caillaux badly misjudged the moment at which even unofficial negotiations might have led to an earlier but still honourable termination of that war. That does not weaken his condemnation of the Treaty of Versailles; and it is important to notice that if war returned twenty years after the signing of that instrument, it was not because the French had been neighbourly to excess in the interval. All the way from 1919 to 1939 the French never extended the generous hand of friendship across the Rhine. This is where Flandin takes up the tale.

When in 1939 France and Germany went to war for the second time in this century, Flandin had been for a number of years leader of the coalition of parties that then formed the French political Right. Nine years later, in February 1948, after a period of eclipse, he made a

sensational re-entry into French politics by appearing "side by side with the secretary of the Socialist party. What had happened to him during those nine years? Two things.

In December 1940, at Vichy, Laval was put under open arrest, and Darlan became deputy prime minister in his stead. Laval had been his own foreign minister. Now Flandin took the portfolio of foreign affairs. He resigned, however, in the following February. More than two and a half years later, in October 1943, he was in Algiers, intending to join the so-called Free French. Instead he was thrown into prison. Yet he was far from being the only Frenchman then in North Africa with service under Marshal Pétain to live down. Why was he singled out for prosecution?

Two recollections depressed the scales against him. It was remembered that in 1938, immediately after Munich, he telegraphed congratulations to Hitler. At Vichy, on the morrow of the armistice of 1940, he had carefully distinguished his attitude from that of Laval. That did not avail. In Algiers the man who had telegraphed to Hitler and the man who had talked to Mussolini were lumped together in a same condemnation.

That was one black mark. The other was that he had certainly welcomed the French armistice.

In 1933 and 1944, while in prison, Flandin exculpated himself to his satisfaction by composing a history of French foreign policy from 1919 to 1940. It was published in France in the summer of 1947.* It is a book not without defects. Among other things, Flandin does not seem invariably candid. He says, for instance, that after Munich he did not telegraph to Hitler only, but to Chamberlain, Daladier, and Musso-

**Politique française 1919-1940* (Paris: Les Editions nouvelles).

him as well, and that his language was more restrained than Roosevelt's in a letter to Hitler written on the same occasion. He neglects to recognize that Roosevelt acted in his official capacity whereas he at the time was a private individual. He does not mention the placards which he had put up all over Paris and which were headed: "French people, you are being deceived!" Those placards may well have incensed the French Left, and have given rise to rancour.

In drawing attention to such omissions, I do not wish to imply that his rejoicing over Munich was folly. It is still being alleged that in 1938 Hitler was bluffing.* What the allegation means is obscure. It is true that after the unconditional surrender of 1945 the Germans disclosed that in 1939 their armies were not yet strong enough to take on more than the Poles. But then neither were the French and their allies, the British, in a position at that time to attack. And if one thing is clear, it is that Hitler was determined to go his way unless prevented by force. As Flandin points out, force was something that the French in 1938 were not in a position to impose.

Unfortunately for the confidence which he must have wished to inspire in his version of history, he does not stop at mentioning this. He attempts to refute what he calls the "perfidious insinuation" that France broke her word to Czechoslovakia. This "insinuation" falls to the ground, he says, as soon as it is noticed that the treaties of 1924 and 1925 were both subject to the provisions of the League Covenant, and that under the Covenant international disputes had to be submitted to the League Council before the possibility of armed intervention could arise. Elsewhere in his

book, however, he deplores the failure of France to oppose Hitler with arms immediately after Hitler had marched his troops into the Rhineland in 1936. Then, so he says, he wanted the Covenant disregarded, but failed to carry the French cabinet with him. If the Covenant might have been flouted in 1936, why not in 1938?

Such features of Flandin's defence will naturally weigh with his readers when they come to his comments on the French armistice of 1940. He says that at the time he did not hear a single *Français de France* dispute the need of it. The one mistake, according to him, was not to have obtained it earlier, and so to have spared a million French soldiers their captivity. To suppose that the French could have carried on the war alone in North Africa is, he says, fantastic. But for the armistice, the Germans would have promptly occupied Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco. It not only preserved for the French at least a semi-freedom which was the condition of their preparing to re-enter the war; it also saved North Africa from enemy occupation, and thereby made possible the allied landings of November 1942.

But to advance this last plea is to be wise after the event. In June 1940 nobody in France foresaw an Anglo-American invasion of North Africa two and a half years later. In June 1940 it was generally supposed, in France that before 1942 the Germans would have ended the war on their own terms. If the armistice is to be justified, it can only be by the benefits which it conferred on the French people. They were not left under the direct domination of the temporary conqueror. Instead, German exactions were resisted. The ordinary citizen did not have to come into direct contact with any Germans. In the unoccupied area French life retained its character and something

* Cf. *To the Bitter End* by Hans Gisevius (1948).

of its independence. For instance, a book such as *La seule France* by Charles Maurras circulated freely, while in Germany itself it was banned.

Far from invoking such considerations, Flandin says that from a purely French standpoint the armistice was a mistake. If the whole nation had continued to fight, there would not have been that lack of moral unity which, as it seemed to him in 1944, was bound to hamper and delay the country's post-war recovery. The statement, which concludes his discussion of the armistice, is not to be reconciled with what he says on the subject earlier. It looks as if he put it in to give the impression that he views international affairs not as a mere Frenchman, but as a European. Repeatedly in the course of his book, he appears to take into account the situation of the English and to sympathize with English feelings. The French defeat of 1940 placed the English, he says, in a delicate situation. It is natural of them to have regarded the defeat as a defection. Where he is dealing with events between 1919 and 1939 he has the air of being even more comprehensive. He is at pains to appear to recognize not only an English but also an American point of view. He even admits that there was a German and an Italian.

But all that apparent broadness of outlook serves as a screen. His defence of his own political conduct is then given a semblance of objectivity thanks to which he can argue with a specious assumption of fairness that French foreign policy between the two wars was wiser and more realistic than British policy, and that whenever he shared in the direction of affairs French policy—if not French action—was always right.

Yet if his own version of events is accepted, without appeal to other sources, what does that policy turn

out to have been? From 1934 onwards it consisted, on the one hand, of acquiescing in every new act of defiance by Hitler, and, on the other hand, of an attempt, in the words of Laval,* "to encircle Germany politically." As is to be expected, Flandin says that France schemed for this "political encirclement" only after efforts to get Germany to co-operate with France had failed. It is true that from 1924 onwards the French policy that had culminated in the occupation of the Ruhr was reversed. But it is necessary to be aware of the terms on which after that date German co-operation was invited.

In 1931 President Hoover proposed a one-year moratorium of the repayment of all international debts. According to Mr. Paul Einzig,† writing in the autumn of the same year, the proposal was made "at a time of severe economic difficulties in the United States" and "raised the moral standing" of that nation "as a creditor beyond measure." It was the French, Mr. Einzig says, who, by haggling over small details, delayed the adoption of the moratorium and reduced its "beneficent psychological effect." Flandin is content to allege that Hoover "imposed" the moratorium on Europe "in defence of his bankers."

The proposal of a moratorium followed on a German financial crisis, which arose, still according to Mr. Einzig, partly as the result of a recall of American credits and partly as the result of a French "bid for financial dictatorship over Europe." On 18 July, 1931, Brüning, the German chancellor, went to Paris to seek help in resolving the crisis. He met Laval, who was then prime minister. Flandin was minister of finance,

**Laval Parle* (Geneva, 1947).

†*Behind the Scenes of International Finance* (London: Macmillan, 1931).

and it was he, he says, who suggested the terms which Laval offered. France would "provide the gold and foreign exchange needed by the Reichsbank on condition Germany agreed to dispute no clause of the Treaty of Versailles for the next ten years and also to carry out the Young plan faithfully." These terms Brüning refused; and he did so, Flandin says, because he was "surrounded by advisers who were already imbued with the Hitler spirit." There is, however, no need to imagine anything of the kind. A recent French commentator remarks:*

The fundamental vice of Laval's position was its hypocrisy. Behind the appearance of conciliation it was trying to use constraint. No doubt it would have been better to adopt an openly coercive policy.

Brüning rejected the terms; because he knew that to have accepted them meant his being swept out of office on a wave of popular indignation.

It is not unfair to say that all the French efforts between 1924 and 1934 to get Germany to co-operate were of the order illustrated by this incident. According to Caillaux, Clemenceau, in 1919, addressed some curious words to the French Senate. He said: "The Germans are a great people. You will have to come to an understanding with them. I have hated them too much. It will be for others, younger men, my successors, to accomplish the great task." Having quoted these words, Caillaux continues:

The astounding piece of eloquence dropped into the void. The man had

sown so much and sensible far bewildering. . . that he was not been understood Germans, who lack of political sense the matter again.

As Clemenceau Caillaux, never matter again, so out the twenty years was completely in of Hitler into off explained by the internal situation preceding decade.

Strangely enough Flandin who speaks a Germany "aversion and the hegemony as if the avidity and unmotivated another place than a case. According plans to win from a strictly justifiable. In face crease of population says, could not if She had no cold wide open, the World had been Hitler succeeded employment among only for a time thanks to his rearmament had been economic and de would have been itself, unless in nation had obtained why, Flandin's predatory eye on Poland, and the

At this point Flandin stops. I to draw the moral

*François Goguel: *La Politique des partis sous la IIIe République*, 2 vols. (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1946).

Three Poems

ROSEMARY THOMAS

DIVORCE

"What do the children know of the divorce?"
What do the children know of the shaft-minded
Spirits, each hearing his own voice,
Each without the tangent that the other needed?

Do not ask me what the children know,
What, in the hot blood that lines their veins,
Chokes them at night, in lonely beds lone-lying,
How, when the door is closed, no light remains.

Do not ask me what shadow we cast,
What hopelessness we sow in these young faces
Eager for light, and damped by instant tears,
And damned forever in familiar places.

WHO WOULD RETURN?

At what cost would we return the years—
The slow deer-leap of years through sunlight moving,
Or behind us like a shadow running,
The lengthened shadow of our hopes and fears?
To-night I saw the shy deer, dapple-drifting,
Through moonlight on the quiet road of evening,
Their honey-coated flanks lost into moonlight,
Into the green they leapt, all green absorbing.
So let the years—those loveliest and wisest
From flint of heart the bitter dust dispersing
Remain the shining rock within the meadow:
For the lost traveller whose search lies deepest
Swift polished hooves of pain are striking
Stars out of stone, and music out of tears.

SAINT INEZ MISSION: CALIFORNIA

The barefoot monk admits us where
With ancient glow warm candles flow
With light. . . . Alone he spends these months,
He says, and, from the deep of recessed thought,
And ears that have not heard
Communication other than a bird's,
Answers the wonder of our worldliness.
The stubbled chin predicts—the dark and lonely eyes
That darkness know alone for nights together, flame:
Humbly we walk where man forgets the thorn
Of dying in the rose of being born.

Three Poems

JOYCE CHADWICK

QUALITY

Something ungraspable here . . . I know I know it.
Cherry-boughs in blossom against indigo hills show it;
The running of a squirrel, the smell of cow-dung, is it
(A fragrance to earth as milk's to a man); wrens, curtsying, kiss it;
It is a tossed windflower's gently assenting nod:
It seems like the Simplicity of a God.

A WOMAN, EXPERIMENTING

Her mind was turned upon wings by a wing-shaped cloud
Curving up from a round white breast of cloud in the east,
Three magpie's wing-feathers in the anemone-wood,
And, suddenly found, among old knives in a chest,
At night, high silver wings, carved over an amethyst.

What would they do to her: hung opposite her, hung over the bed,
Holding the moonrays and, full, sending them back
Through the level line of her body, awaiting hands and uncommencing
head?

What would they do to her, given up to the hint in them, slack
As a sleeping snake, or, awaiting its threshers, corn heavy in the stack?

A blackbird's last three notes were the final

Sound she heard—but she woke

And reeling then in the orchard a nightingale

Spoke . . .

And the piercing pain of the snake time-threshed into hawk

She knew; hawk melted away by its prey, the perdurable dove;

The office and force of this mode of divine love

Time is, passing: Space as the wings drooped over and brooding the
whole.

LETTING THE EYES REST

Letting the eyes rest

On a rock, or a face, or a tree

Without prejudice, peacefully,

Stirring and steadying there

It is beauty I see

In any kind of a face, anywhere.

Letting the eyes rest

On the creature, the flame

Of creation I see, I remember,

I want and I worship, I run to, I am:

Fanning, infinitesimally.

Three Poems

MICHAEL HAMBURGER

A PARK: AUTUMN 1944

The deer are desolate; amongst the fern
that is withered, broken, the pheasants walk,
then flee, shrieking. The wild doves flutter and talk
in twisted trees, whose senile veins still yearn
for another spring and the sap's return.
"The Master's gone," and no one now will stalk
through these damp woods, or hunt the hunting hawk;
these trees shall rot, these faggots shall not burn.

Peacocks and swans shall not be seen again,
the mirrors, the gilt frames shall crack and fall;
the sifting centuries have worked in vain.

Wildly the owls cry, softly the bats call
to the ruthless moon piercing their dead realm,
old grandeur which three words can overwhelm.

"THE TEMPEST": AN ALTERNATIVE

I, Prospero, stand on this island's shore,
and from a distance vaguer and more dubious
than a dream I hear voices as of lovers
whispering in the night and courtiers jesting.

I recall a tempest that created peace;
but the power that brought forth storms and stillness
is quite decayed, so they have left me here,
an old man with a bent back, who has outlived
his death.

Yes, once they called me prince;
(though then my pride lay elsewhere) until I fled
and made this isle my kingdom, ruling by magic.

I recall a tempest raised for the sake
of a mortal throne, a night and a day
of mortal music . . . and then this stillness.

Now I bear logs for Caliban whose lust
has peopled the isle with monsters, begotten
on my daughter; sweet Miranda's grown a hag
with hatching of his slimy progeny.

Perhaps it was a dream (the human voices
and my hoping to follow them)—and a mere dream
has made me weary—but my master calls,
I'm coming, Caliban. One night, one day
lost me my dukedom and my soul's wide realm,
Ariel deserted me and they left me here.

A S O N G A B O U T G R E A T M E N

Pity those men who from the start
were martyrs of some dream or art,
who marched through continents or tried
to till the desert of the heart,
who won or lost the game and died.

Not immortality but time
flourished the whip that made them climb
frail Everests or try to hide
the grief of Adam in a rhyme;
they found or lost themselves and died.

Whether an empire or a book
was the rich bait upon the hook
that landed them, do not deride
the rare explorers who forsook
their native shelters, bit and died.

Pity old Abelard who drove
angels and devils from his love,
and Casanova's foolish pride
in pushing what he could not move:
they won or lost the game and died.

Pity the men whose vast desire
was both the fuel and the fire,
who could not, though we can, divide
the plucking finger from the lyre,
but set their souls to words and died.

Between the poles of love and death
they too were torn and spent their breath
in vain endeavours to decide
between the garden and the wreath,
and still endeavoured when they died.

The towns they stormed, the crowns they wore,
the boundaries they fixed, the roar,
the ranting and the homicide
left us no better than before
nor them the wiser when they died.

Pity those men who from the start
defied the desert of the heart,
the victims of some crazy pride
in love, in armies or in Art,
who won or lost the game and died.

REVIEWS

The Free Society

John Middleton Murry

Dakers, 12s. 6d.

This is a curious and interesting book. The adjective "interesting" means here, that the present reviewer was able to read it through without at any moment finding that his attention had wandered. A book which can command such close attention from a reader whose capacity for interest has been diminished by half a lifetime spent in reading manuscripts, must certainly be interesting. But when I say that it is "curious" I mean that its construction makes it peculiarly difficult to review, without injustice both to the purpose of the author in writing it and to the purpose of this reviewer in reviewing it. To some extent, the several chapters produce the effect of collected essays, which mark the course of the author's mind through an extensive maze of discourse, rather than that of a work planned to a definite outline. There are repetitions; themes are repeated with variations; and the reader experiences at moments the irritation of being taken repeatedly over the same ground. In spite of this

apparent formlessness, the book is interesting: because, I think, of the strength of the author's emotion, which is of a kind that promotes lucidity and expresses itself in a spare and simple style. It is not of any structural defect, however, that I have to complain. My complaint is that the author has made his book difficult to review by putting what seem to me two books under one cover. He is, of course, aware of a division, which he has indicated by calling the first book "Part I" and the second book "Part II." To those who are able to give general assent to the theses of Part II, the conjunction will not prove so embarrassing as it has proved to me. But I am afraid lest, in exposing my doubts and questions about the second part, I may obscure the importance of the first. Not that I regard the second part as unimportant; only, it is important for a different reason.

In the first half, then, Mr. Murry is concerned with the exposition of an attitude towards Russia. It is the attitude of one who has been a pacifist—a Christian pacifist; and readers who are not, or who have never been pacifists might at first sight presume that Mr. Murry's present attitude has no relevance to

their own. In this they would be mistaken; but I think that what gives this part of the book its impressiveness, and contributes towards the effect of complete sincerity, is that Mr. Murry of today is arguing with Mr. Murry of a few years ago. When a writer convinces you that his primary concern is to get his own ideas right, rather than to persuade the reader; and when, in so doing, he reveals the struggle which he has had to make, in altering his beliefs, the result may be something that can be called, in a wholly eulogistic sense, a "confession."

In this part of the book there are incidental remarks which one is inclined to quote with warm approval. There are also specific suggestions as to what should be done. We may or may not consider one or another proposal desirable or practicable. I am sure that other reviewers will discuss the question of the Atomic Board of Control. I do not think that the value of Part I of Mr. Murry's book depends upon the particular ways and means that he offers for coping with the Russian menace. Its value is not that of a plan or programme, of an intellectual scheme, but of the revulsion of the whole person against something monstrous and foul. Such a declaration, at the present time, is, I think, more important than the formulation of plans. For the thing to which Mr. Murry is opposing himself is not so much a foreign power and its inordinate ambitions, as an infection amongst ourselves. This is a moral infection, conveyed through emotion rather than through; and the need which Mr. Murry's essay comes to fill is the need for a moral indignation to counteract it. There is nothing more important in this part of the book than its repudiation of the *New Statesman* mentality. The book should make many amiable and en-

lightered liberals look, reprehensibly silly.

For my part, I cannot wish that Mr. Murry had written one book out of Part I and a second book out of Part II. They could both afford to be rather more fully documented and detailed. And the second part of the book arouses in me two misgivings. The first is a doubt about Mr. Murry's kind of Christianity, the second a doubt about his understanding of political philosophy. I do not think that there is any logical interdependence: it is preferable, in any case, to discuss them as two distinct problems.

In discussing Mr. Murry's Christianity, I must admit that I have not yet been able to understand it. He is evidently aware that his views will disturb the orthodox, for he says:

To say that the life of the Christian Church depends upon the life of the free society may be shocking to many Christians, who would hold that the life of the free society depends upon the life of the Christian Church.

I am familiar with the concept of "emergent deity," as I believe it has been called: of God as somehow the creation of man. Mr. Murry's God seems to be of this kind. A God who is not dependent on human beings who are aware of him becomes an abstraction, for

the reality of the God who speaks through the moral conscience and the conscience of reason is dependent upon those who hear and obey his voice.

(This seems to me tantamount to saying, that when Mr. Murry makes a telephone call, his reality depends upon there being someone at the other end to lift the receiver and say "Hallo?") It is not clear whether we must keep God alive in order to save our civilization, or whether we must preserve our civilization in order to save God; the one thing certain is that they survive or perish as one, and that they are menaced by Russia. We and God, in fact, must hang together. Now, I am not con-

cerned with whether such propositions about God are true or false: but to maintain them, and to continue to believe in Christianity or any other religion, seems to me just impossible. There is nothing left from which religious feeling can draw any aliment. To be told that Jesus Christ "emerges as the central figure of the Logos-civilization" is discouraging for those who must have a deity they can *worship, love, and fear*, and who, if they cannot have that, prefer to dispense with deity altogether. But there is more than this. It would almost seem as if Christianity had had a single historical function—the bringing about of the "free society." It may even be that, in Mr. Murry's view, Christianity has now served its purpose and is no longer required: certainly so little of what we have known as Christianity appears to be required, that there seems little value in preserving the name. "The Christian community has passed outside the tutelage of the Church."

I am, as always when I read Mr. Murry on the subject of Christianity, unable to understand what he means by Christianity. Let me turn therefore, though without great hope, to trying to understand what he means by "the free society."

Here my difficulty is in believing that any possible society can be described by a single adjective; and when our sole, or even chief desideratum of society is that it should be "free," even freedom becomes evacuated of meaning. I cannot, incidentally, believe that a society from which war had been abolished, as Mr. Murry wishes to abolish it, could actually be free; it would seem to me that the abolition of war could only come about together with the abolition of freedom.

It seems to me that the "economic equality" also, which Mr. Murry declares to be the goal, would be achieved only at the expense of freedom. (Mr. Murry does not make clear how literally he takes the term "economic equality," for in one place he qualifies it by referring to *great* profit and *great* emolument as undesirable.) In fact, Mr. Murry seems to me to be like most of us, in wanting other things besides freedom: and in making freedom, and economic equality, and the abolition of war, all absolute aims, he is wanting things not all of which we can have to the same degree at the same time. I am not even clear how far Mr. Murry regards the free society as something actual, and how far he regards it as the goal towards which we should strive: he sometimes gives one impression and sometimes the other.

If we are to employ any one set of terms to describe two opposed types of society, I should prefer (for what they are worth) *organic* and *mechanical*. These terms may also represent two types of political philosophy. Concepts like *freedom*, and *equality*, and whatever may be taken as antithetical to freedom and equality, such as *order, discipline, rank, or hierarchy*, get their content within particular societies, each with its own history. A living form of government (which is itself an abstraction from the way of life of a particular people) may have the most unhappy effects when set up as a *mechanism* in another society: two hundred years of India ought to have brought that fact home to us. And the concept of "freedom" abstracted from the history of Britain and then re-applied to Britain *mechanically*, might also have unfortunate effects.

T. S. ELIOT

Great Morning

Osbert Sitwell. *Macmillan*, 15s.

As the successive wars, like ranges of hills, rear their bulk between ourselves and the past, autobiography becomes a sort of antiquarianism. One need only be a little over forty to remember things that are as remote from the present age as chain armour or girdles of chastity. Many people have remarked nostalgically on the fact that before 1914 you could travel to any country in the world, except perhaps Russia, without a passport. But what strikes me in retrospect as even more startling is that in those days you could walk into a bicycle shop—an ordinary bicycle shop, not even a gunsmith's—and buy a revolver and cartridges, with no questions asked. Clearly, that is not the kind of social atmosphere that we shall ever see again, and when Sir Osbert Sitwell writes of "before 1914" with open regret, his emotion can hardly be called reactionary. Reaction implies an effort to restore the past, and though the world might conceivably be pushed back to the pattern of 1938, there can be no more question of restoring the Edwardian age than of reviving Albigenianism.

Not that Sir Osbert's early years were altogether carefree, as readers of the first two volumes of his autobiography will have noticed. His father, Sir George Sitwell, was a trying man to have any dealings with: an architectural genius gone astray, who squandered fantastic sums in megalomaniac building schemes, which extended even to altering the landscape and constructing artificial lakes whose water seeped into the coalmines below and caused endless lawsuits—all this while considering a shilling a week sufficient pocket-money for a boy of nineteen, and even refusing to rescue his wife from the

clutches of a money-lender. Architecture apart, his main purpose in life—not, perhaps, from downright malice but as a sort of prolonged practical joke—was to force everyone connected with him into doing whatever he or she most disliked. Osbert, whose antipathy to horses was well known, was driven into a cavalry regiment, then escaped into the Grenadier Guards, then, when he seemed too happy in the Guards, was found a job in the Town Clerk's office in Scarborough, after receiving lessons in pot-hooks (to improve his handwriting) at the age of twenty. The war rescued him from this, but his brother and sister were similarly treated. Nevertheless the last few years before the war were happy ones, and, making all allowance for his abnormal position as a rich man's son, he is probably right in feeling that English life then had a gaiety that has never been recovered.

Life in the Guards was pleasant because it meant being stationed in London, which in its turn meant theatres, music and picture galleries. Osbert's brother officers were civilized and tolerant, and his colonel even excused him for sitting in a café with Jacob Epstein, who was in private's uniform. It was the age of Chaliapin and the Russian Ballet, and of the revival in England of a serious interest in music and painting. It was also the age of ragtime and the tango, of the k-nuts in their grey top hats, of house-boats and hobble skirts, and of a splashing to and fro of wealth such as the world had not seen since the early Roman empire. The Victorian puritanism had at last broken down, money was pouring in from all directions, and the sense of guilt which is now inseparable from a privileged position had not yet developed. Barney Barnato and Sir William Whiteley were held up as models to emulate, and it was meritorious not merely

to be rich, but to look rich. Life in London was a ceaseless round of entertainment, on a scale unheard-of before and barely imaginable now:

One band in a house was no longer enough, there must be two, even three. Electric fans whirled on the top of enormous blocks of ice, buried in banks of hydrangeas, like the shores from which the barque departs for Cythera. Never had there been such displays of flowers. . . . Never had Europe seen such mounds of peaches, figs, nectarines and strawberries at all seasons, brought from their steamy tents of glass. Champagne bottles stood stacked on the sideboards. . . . As guests, only the poor of every race were barred. Even foreigners could enter, if they were rich. There was also the life of the country houses, with their platoons of servants. Osbert, inimical to horses, was no hunting man, but he enjoyed his shooting expeditions in spite of, or perhaps because of the fact that he never succeeded in killing anything, and his talks with the crabbed old gamekeeper, a type of man now extinct—the type that accepts a position of vassalage, and within that framework is able to enjoy a considerable independence.

Of course, if you happened not to belong to the world of champagne and hothouse strawberries, life before 1914 had serious disadvantages. Even today, after two murderous wars, the manual workers throughout most of the world are probably better off, in a physical sense, than they were then. In Britain they are unquestionably better off. But will this still be true after a third world war, this time conducted with atom bombs? Or even after another fifty years of soil erosion and squandering of the world's fuel resources? Before 1914, moreover, people had the inestimable advantage of not knowing that war was coming, or, if they did know it, of not foreseeing what it would be like. Sir Osbert does not claim much more than that life in those days was fun for a privileged minority, and, as anyone who

has read *Before the Bombardment* will know, he is perfectly alive to the vulgarity and grotesqueness of the whole epoch. His political outlook, in so far as this book implies one at all, seems to be a mild liberalism. "In those days," he says, "the rich were as much and unjustly revered as they are now reviled." But in the golden summer of 1914 he greatly enjoyed being rich, and he is honest enough to say so.

There is now a widespread idea that nostalgic feelings about the past are inherently vicious. One ought, apparently, to live in a continuous present, a minute-to-minute cancellation of memory, and if one thinks of the past at all it should merely be in order to thank God that we are so much better than we used to be. This seems to me a sort of intellectual face-lifting, the motive behind which is a snobbish terror of growing old. One ought to realise that a human being cannot continue developing indefinitely, and that a writer, in particular, is throwing away his heritage if he repudiates the experience of his early life. In many ways it is a grave handicap to remember that lost paradise "before the war"—that is, before the other war. In other ways it is an advantage. Each generation has its own experience and its own wisdom, and though there is such a thing as intellectual progress, so that the ideas of one age are sometimes demonstrably less silly than those of the last—still, one is likelier to make a good book by sticking to one's early-acquired vision than by a futile effort to "keep up." The great thing is to be your age, which includes being honest about your social origins. In the nineteen-thirties we saw a whole literary generation, or at least the most prominent members of a generation, either pretending to be proletarians or indulging in public orgies of

self-hatred because they were not proletarians. Even if they could have kept up this attitude (today, a surprising number of them have either fled to America or found themselves jobs in the B.B.C. or the British Council), it was a stupid one, because their bourgeois origin was not a thing that could be altered. It is to Sir Osbert Sitwell's credit that he has never pretended to be other than he is: a member of the upper classes, with an amused and leisurely attitude which comes out in his manner of writing, and which could only be the product of an expensive upbringing. Probably, so far as his memory serves him, he records his likes and dislikes accurately, which always needs

moral courage. How easy it would have been to write of Eton or the Grenadier Guards in a spirit of sneering superiority, with the implication that from earliest youth he was the holder of enlightened sentiments which, in fact, no comfortably-placed person did hold a generation ago. Or how easy, on the other hand, to stand on the defensive and try to argue away the injustice and inequality of the world in which he grew up. He has done neither, with the result that these three volumes (*Left Hand, Right Hand, The Scarlet Tree and Great Morning*), although the range they cover is narrow, must be among the best autobiographies of our time. GEORGE ORWELL

E Baltic Eclipse

Andras. Gollancz, 15s.

This book had not been written, the truth about one whole chapter in the history of Europe in the early 1940's would probably never have been known to English readers.

In June 1940, when western eyes could look nowhere but at France, the independent, prosperous and highly-civilized Republic of Estonia was overrun by the Russians. A year later the Russians were driven out by Hitler's *Wehrmacht*, which remained in occupation of the country until it was expelled by the Russians in September 1944. From that time to this, the Russians have been in occupation of Estonia.

Such are the facts that were known to everybody. What was not known was how the Russians overran the country in the first place and how they behaved during that first year; how the Germans drove them out and how the Germans conducted themselves during their three and a quarter

years of occupation; how, if at all, the Estonian people resisted, and how they fared under the second Russian occupation. And it seemed probable that all of this would remain unknown. The iron curtain descended as soon as the Russians went in to Estonia in 1940. There was no English observer there at the time, or none who survived and was competent to tell the story veritably. When the Russians were succeeded by the Germans, one iron curtain was replaced by another. When the Russians returned again, the only official versions of the Baltic eclipse were still the Nazi and the Communist: one could turn on the wireless and take one's choice. There were unofficial versions, of course—the atrocity stories of refugees who succeeded in escaping; but few of these were credible and none gave a picture of the whole scene. All that was clear was that a civilization, an especially western, democratic civilization, had been destroyed.

Dr. Oras is a refugee, but he has qualities and qualifications that the

others lack. He was Professor of English Literature in the University of Tartu and remained in that post throughout the first Russian occupation and the greater part of the German. Unlike most scholars, he writes a beautiful, easy-seeming English, and something of the fastidious integrity of his character comes through in this book. He knew personally most of the quasi-quislings whom the Russians used for their first puppet government, and writes about them with an insight which throws light on all the fellow-traveller *genus*. His understanding of Russian and German brought him into closer contact with the conquerors than either *Herrenfolk* suspected. He was not a politician; he has no grievance, only a grief which the whole of our western civilization must share.

The terrifying thing about that first Russian occupation of Estonia was its mixture of competence and incompetence, of well-planned, well-timed thoroughness and fantastic, barbaric muddle. Propagandists of either side have described the first aspect or the second, and each no doubt with justification, but no picture of Russian conduct in any part of the world is complete without the two. I know of no more revealing account of Soviet-Russian methods than that given in Dr. Oras' chapter on the sovietization of the University of Tartu. Compared with the Russians, the Germans were not terrifying, though they were equally terroristic. The contrast between thoroughness and fantasy was less striking—though Dr. Oras has a wonderful snapshot of the cultured, music-loving barbarians whom the Nazis put in charge of the University (they had been detailed for the occupation of Oxford, but owing to some breakdown in the Nazi time-

table found themselves in Tartu). What emerges from this story of the two occupations is the essential sameness of totalitarianism; its rival practitioners were worlds apart in ideology, culture and experience but their conduct was inevitably the same.

In his penultimate chapter, where Dr. Oras, no longer writing as an eye-witness, describes the campaign in which the Russians won Estonia for the second time, he makes a contribution to the history of the war which the official historians will be wise not to neglect. Compiled from the evidence of survivors whose veracity the author is in a good position to judge, this will compare surprisingly with the only two other versions likely to be available; the Russian and German military writers will have another tale to tell.

In spite of all, or rather because of all, its restraint and its emphasis, this book is incredibly moving. It tells the story of one of the three lost nations, the only total losses, in the national sense, of the last war. "The Germans, the Japanese, and the Italians," Professor Oras writes, "are, by comparison, being positively pampered by the generous pity and commiseration of the victors. The Baltic nations, entirely innocent of the least suspicion of war-guilt as they are, are yet passed over in silence. It does not seem the correct thing to mention them. Yet their plight is much more terrible than that of any other oppressed peoples. They are threatened with extermination like the Aztecs and Incas," as a member of an international conference recently remarked in London. His remark was not reported by the newspapers."

J. HAMPDEN JACKSON

Turnstile One

A Literary Miscellany from the *New Statesman and Nation* edited by V. S. Pritchett.

Turnstile Press, 10s. 6d.

Do you remember your first sight of the *New Statesman*? I shall never forget mine: in the train, fifteen years ago, to Charing Cross. It was being read by a rather fat Girl Guide sitting opposite and, under the impression that it was the *Exchange and Mart*, I asked her to swap with my *Picturegoer*. The scene that followed requires a pen, as I believe Sir Max Beerbohm puts it about himself, far less witty than mine to do it justice.

What, then, is your attitude to the *New Statesman*? Do you, like one of the friends of the late James Agate pick up your copy with a pair of tongs? With rubber gloves? Or do you wander among the traffic deep in the "London Diary," hand in hand with Mr. Mortimer's latest Bishop, or fighting for air among those excruciating competitions? If so, this miscellany is the bedside book for you: unless you have bought every bedside book recommended by the reviewers over the last twenty years and now have no room for your bed.

Turnstile One contains 24 poems, 12 short stories, 28 essays and reviews, six pieces of music and art criticism and two letters to the Editor. I have no idea what the thunderstruck reviewer is supposed to say of a list of contributors which includes E. M. Forster, Walter de la Mare, Alun Lewis, W. H. Auden, Mikhail Zoshchenko, Chehov, Elizabeth Bowen, William Plomer, David Garnett, James Joyce, Lytton Strachey, Hilaire Belloc, Roger Fry, T. W. Earp and Logan Pearsall Smith. Furthermore, the appearance of the book is a triumph: its dust-jacket of tooth-paste-pink, its binding of grey and

gold and (is it?) carnation red. In these austere times, it looks almost good enough to eat.

First among my own predilections in this brilliant assembly (and I warmly recommend this book, if only that you may re-discover how brilliant literary journalism can be) is Stella Benson's paralysing study of the behaviour of children: a note for a Baedeker that cries aloud to be written. Here is a fragment:

Too often observers in that icy world of the very young wrap their perceptions in wrappings of patronizing tolerance—"Dear little mites . . . funny little things . . . quaint little minds developing . . . !" Too rarely does a dispassionate and respectful explorer eavesdrop in the jungle thoroughfares of that far world. . . . It seems to me that there is no such thing as youth, except in comparison with age. Children in the presence of children are not Little Things at all; they are more appallingly mature than we, the middle-aged, ever dare to be.

I feel that I shall be returning to this rewarding, this staggering essay (which seems, to me to be itself worth the price of the book) when—alas—I shall have forgotten John Betjeman's Pam, that "great big mountainous sports girl"; *Actaeon's Lament*, a sensuous, leaping poem by Sidney Keyes; the poetry and irony of Louis MacNeice's *Les Sylphides*; *Answer to Prayer*, a short story written by H. G. Wells at the time of the abdication of Edward VIII; Cyril Connolly on Noel Coward: a clear case, I thought, of dog eating chien; a letter from Germany written twenty years ago by D. H. Lawrence: amazing in its sensitivity to the spirit of Germany at that time; Virginia Woolf on Scott and the gas at Abbotsford: "He loved a bright light, and he did not mind a slight smell"—a phrase, I thought, neatly describing any admirer of any of Scott's novels; G. W. Stonier on Joe Nollekens: an essay which sent me scurrying five years ago to J. T. Smith's first-class biography. And, finally,

there is Rebecca West, on Rudyard Kipling.

It has often seemed fantastic (she writes) that the author of *MacAndrew's Hymn* should have feared and loathed the aeroplane. Perhaps he felt that, had he given his passion for machinery its head, that and the rest of his creed might have led him straight to Dneprostroy.

I cannot help wondering what my

Girl Guide in the train to Charing Cross would have made of that. Perhaps, like Sally Bowles, if she reads this she will send a postcard and tell me? But then, perhaps by this time she is a regular reader of *Exchange and Mart*.

CHARLES CAUSLEY

The Artist and Society

Gino Severini, translated by
Bernard Wall. Harvill Press, 4s.

Art and Social Responsibility

Alex Comfort. Falcon, 7s. 6d.

These two books, despite the similarity of their titles, have no final identity of aim. Their single common interest lies in their both seeking to maintain the freedom of the individual, particularly the creative individual; their divergence, in the bases on which they ground their claims, and in the ultimate purpose to which they conceive man's freedom being applied.

Gino Severini, the Italian artist, speaks from the Catholic point of view that conceives of man *sub specie aeternitatis*, and of any ideal comity of individuals as orderly, hierarchic: there is explicit reference to "the two natural units of society—the State and the family." The first of these, the personalised State, is the very thing that Mr. Comfort is bent on destroying. Both these books are extremely valuable analyses of the dilemma of our time; both symptomatic of the opposed conclusions of contemporary thinkers. If Signor Severini is revolutionary, Mr. Comfort is very largely, though not entirely, destructive and subversive. The impasse of our megalopolitan civilization, so ably treated by Lewis Mumford in *The Culture of*

Cities, Technics and Civilization, and especially in *The Condition of Man*—of which I treated at some length in these columns last spring—permits, as Mumford sees it, of only one solution: for mankind to unite—or perish. The only practical question for the thinkers of to-day would seem to be whether such unity can, or cannot, be achieved by modification of, and co-operation within, the existing social order: by an economy of reciprocity replacing one of competition; by expansion giving way to stabilization; by a gradual increase in size of the unit of society, culminating in larger and larger "federal unions," ultimately in a United States of the World, to replace the present nation states.

Without its ever explicitly examining the problem it is clear the Severini-Wall book works on the assumption of salvaging in some form the existing social order, and examines what are the special safeguards of liberty the contemporary artist must be intent upon securing, and how they may best be achieved. Because the tenets of scientific materialism constitute in essence a denial of human dignity, and because "the materialist solution of the dualism between spirit and matter considers matter and not spirit to be the primordial factor," these authors see therein the greatest menace to individual liberty. The long chief section of the book examines "The Position of Art in Russia." It is full of wise

discrimination and discernment; but the lack of political, as distinguished from ethical and religious, preconceptions is shown in the following chapter on "Art and Money," with its forthright opening:

If there is a domination by anonymous masses and an ideological and total dictatorship in Russia, it is only fair to balance against this the dictatorship of money by which the bourgeois democracies have enslaved the spirit and caused culture and the arts to be deflected from their true course.

These are the twin perils. "Between these two forms of dictatorship, the one open and the other more or less hidden, the intellectual and the artist are left hanging in the void": between the claims of the Kremlin and Wall Street the path must somehow be steered. The last word is with Emmanuel Mounier, editor of *Esprit*, with whose sentiments Signor Severini identifies himself: "Art is made for man, for everything which serves to fulfil him and his true inner freedom, against all that enslaves or diminishes him."

Signor Severini places his hopes, as I say, on the reassertion of spiritual and individual values within modified forms of the present social structure; Mr. Comfort's sole aim is the complete disintegration, actively pursued, of the whole existing order. He is one of the most clear-eyed exponents in our time of the full anarchist position. To him there is a vital distinction between a "community"—a loose agglomeration of individuals united by the Kropotkin principles of *Mutua Aid*—and a "society" such as the entity of any of the nation states to-day. The first is personal and responsible; the second, in its dehumanization or its supra-personalism, destroys all individual freedom and, arrogating to itself powers and rights to which it cannot possibly be entitled, and vesting them in a non-human abstraction, the State, renders its

members in the highest degree irresponsible.

"We are living in a madhouse whenever society is allowed to become personalised and regarded as a super-individual," writes Mr. Comfort. "We are living in a madhouse now." The recurrent tendency of a society, he thinks, is to "degenerate into barbarism," and against its "irresponsible directives" he exhorts disobedience, "the obligation of being responsibly human." "The war for freedom," he goes on, "is the war against society. There is no other enemy": in moments of social expansion he admits it is difficult for the artist always to see this; but in our present phase of disintegration the role of "masterless man" is forced upon him. "Urban civilization," he feels, "cannot by its nature have any use for a writer who is not prepared to be a prostitute. . . . The furious obedience of the Good Citizen is morally irresponsible."

Naturally, as an outspoken pacifist, Mr. Comfort sees one major form of protest to lie in civil disobedience to the calls to war. He sees the last war not as one of our poets saw it—an attempt to "defend the bad against the worse"—but as "an action on behalf of an unreality against an insanity" from which the morally responsible human being had to stand aside. The trouble was that most of us had delegated our responsibility. "Military action, itself a part of barbarism," could not salvage civilization; and looking back now on the war he finds support for his thesis:

The outcome of it has been the same as in every previous war—the people have lost it. Every sacrifice made in it is futile, every citation of the enemy's brutality is made to justify the adoption of similar brutality. . . . It will be a new just cause next time, and when they begin to say, "Look, injustice," you must reply, "Whom do you want me to kill?"

argument is cogent, and
perhaps timely: the failure of the
ideal to resist irresponsible
civilization is one of the causes,
Comfort asserts, of our mori-
Western civilization—and not
of course, his failure to resist
the realm of military conscrip-

The insidious propaganda,
direct and oblique, of the film in the
tests of such irresponsible
civilization is skilfully revealed.
Such negation there is also the
positive counterpart; though it is
of the weaknesses of the
historical position in general, in-
cluding Mr. Comfort's, that their
programme is largely destructive
contains little about the means
reintegration of the new com-
munity. But he does add here that
of the anthropological essen-
of a 'civilization' is a group
in which the individual retains
responsibility" and elsewhere
aims "mutual aid, personal
responsibility, and direct action as
three criteria of a civilized
community." Though again, "direct
action" is nowhere satisfactorily
defined.

much for Mr. Comfort's
political attack on the contemporary
political structure. My main
objection with him is his arrogation
of his theories of the word
anarchism when Anarchism
is the correct term as well as
a more exact one philosophi-
cally. "Romanticism," a term
not used by the new writers and
not of personal freedom and
individual responsibility, though
associated with the more modest and use-
distinguishing prefix "neo-"
is too vague and too emotive to be
really valuable in sociological
writing: it only leads to confusion.
For example, Mr. Comfort
states "The romantic's pessimistic
interpretation of philosophy makes
pretention towards his fellow men
as you might feel towards
the survivors on a raft," wherein

does that differ from Cecil Day
Lewis, at that time at any rate a
"classical" Marxist, when he wrote
"I sang as one Who on a tilting
deck sings To keep their courage
up"? Or how does "the ethic of
romanticism is an ethic derived
entirely from man," square with the
romanticism of, say, Wordsworth?
Or Coleridge? It is insufficient to
call an arbitrary set of beliefs
"Romanticism" and cite Shelley
because he held some of the tenets.
The word has too many connota-
tions, and it should be made clear
that only certain aspects of it, e.g.
its egocentricity, have peculiar
validity to-day in the Anarchist
cause. Certain aspects of Roman-
ticism are almost directly opposed
to it. Surely it was the Romantic
doctrine of the perfectibility of man
that led to the Victorian belief in
continual progress which is still at
the base of our megalopolitan
civilization despite the ugly cracks
in the fabric—cracks which it is the
anarchist's purpose to enlarge till
the whole edifice collapse.

I lay this stress on the wrong use
of a vague and highly emotive word
only because of the large place it
occupies in the book; but an error
in nomenclature does not invalidate
the book's thesis. That thesis is
maintained with a consistent force-
fulness and vigour. It is a call to a
far more fundamental reconsidera-
tion of our relations with our fellow
men than Signor Severini makes;
but perhaps that is only because he
is able to lean on what are to him
certain, not sociological but theo-
logical, axioms about the nature of
human existence and the right order
of man's relationship to his fellows.
To him Mr. Comfort's attack on the
entire social structure would be like
trying to throw away the baby with
the bath water; Mr. Comfort's
retort, I imagine, would be that he
would replace it with a more
organically sound baby.

HERMANN PESCHMANN

The Muses's Darling:

A Life of Christopher Marlowe.

Charles Norman

Falcon Press, 12s. 6d.

In 1925 Mr. Leslie Hotson published his *Death of Christopher Marlowe* and threw the first clear light on the mystery shrouding the life and death of that remarkable young man. Now, twenty-three years later, Charles Norman has published what must perforce be considered the last word on that intriguing subject. His debt to Mr. Hotson is great, but he acknowledges it and succeeds in forging his predecessor's raw material into a book from which he hangs a surprisingly vivid picture of the age in which Marlowe lived.

The portrait which emerges from Mr. Norman's book is not a pleasant one. We are shown Marlowe in the roles of scholar, spy, brawler, atheist and play-wright and are left with the impression that his sordid death was eminently suited to his shady life. And yet, whether because he was a poet of genius or because he was a young man with the foolhardy courage of his convictions, the emotion which we feel at his early death is stronger than disinterested pity.

For in Marlowe we face the old problem of whether one should dissociate art and conduct, and the fact that more than three centuries separate us from the author of *The Tragical Historie of Dr. Faustus* does not make the question less pertinent. Mr. Norman is a true Marlowe "fan" but he is also a sound historian. He neither condemns nor countenances. His vague partisanship is apparent only in the manner in which he superintends the lighting of his canvas, and arranges that the romantic aspects

of Marlowe's character are shown to their best advantage; and would begrudge him that?

Despite recent discoveries, amount of information extant Marlowe is incredibly small, yet Norman has expanded his material into 250 pages. Every available is here, and the text is embellished with many photographs of original manuscripts and other interesting documents. Even so, were it not the pen-portraits of Marlowe's associates and the sketches of contemporary scene, *The Muses's Darling* would be a very small volume. We are shown them: Kyd, Greene, Shakespeare, Nashe, Raleigh, Spenser and a host of lesser figures, and from time to time Mr. Norman reconstructs scenes from their lives. Such a one is the arrest of Kyd on a charge of heresy:

As one in a dream pursued by horrifying, sinister shapes, Kyd sees men of the law close in about him. The oppressive warmth of the room suddenly has turned cold, and an agony of fear holds him rooted to the spot. The light is swept out of the room, in the midst of his heavy-footed abductors, down the stairs and into the fog-haunted street. He is under arrest. He is a prisoner in an unreal world. But now the wheels of fate begin to whirr and plunge forward, his mind full of prayer for his swift release. In the street leaving behind wisps and strays of fog he haunts the air.

But I, for one, will willingly forgive him those "wisps and stray fog." To me they lie but lightly on the scales against the manner in which he has presented his facts. For in avoiding pedantry he has succeeded in presenting besides many sound views on Marlowe's poetry, a convincing picture of that remarkable age. If one detects a faint glimmer of Hollywood, it is as well to remember that it all happened many, many years ago.

JOHN LE MAISTRE

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